My Love Please Kill Me...
Sapphire Star

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My Love, Please Kill Me

By SapphireStar

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Chapter 1

[pt.1] The Beauty and The Warrior

Part 1

[Lunalea POV]

My life began when Lord Raphael found me. He woke me from a terrifying nightmare, where I was surrounded by dozens of burned carcasses. I remembered nothing but red and black before Lord Raphael stood before me. His silvery hair was shining bright in the moonlight, so was his armor. But the thing about him that shone most brightly was his smile.

“Are you alright, young lady?” he asked me, gently rendering his hand to me. His voice was beautiful

and melodic, soothing and calming. Before I even realized it, my hand had already reached out to take his.

Lord Raphael took me to the castle. I quickly learned that he was an important person, noticing that almost everyone bowed before him, addressing him politely (sometimes over-politely). First of all Lord Raphael took me to the infimary, he made sure that my wounds were tended, that I got to clean myself, got some clean clothes and some food, then he brought me to a big room where I could rest.

When he knew that I had lost my memory and I didn't even remember my name, Lord Raphael gave me one: Lunalea. Because, he told me, it was fullmoon when he found me. If it's not for the fullmoon, he wouldn't be able to notice that I was still alive amongst all those corpses.

It only took me one day to recover my physical injuries. The woman in the infirmary told me that I had the gift of healing and that I had some raw magic power within me. She also told me that she could

train me to be a healer and taught me how to use my power. I accepted her offer.

[Mikael POV]

Our kingdom was at war with the demons. Hundreds of years ago they raised from the underworld and began to invade our world. So many people died. The demons attacked villages at first, turning them into their bases. Then they started attacking towns. My father, mother, brother and sister were slaughtered during one of their raids. A few remaining survivors including me fled to the castle. The castle was actually a massive stronghold, the one place the demons hadn't dared to attack. In the castle, I was trained to be a warrior. I practiced day and night, I turned my hatred towards the demons into my energy, my power. I swore I would kill as many demons as I could and drive them back to once they came, the underworld.

It was ten years ago. During that time, I couldn't count anymore how many battles I had engaged, how many victories I had claimed. Before I knew it I had

stood amongst the four great generals. And I had my own palace on the south side of the castle.

That day I had just come back from a battle, exhausted and pissed. I went straight to Raphael's palace, still wearing full armor stained by blood everywhere; the blood of the demons and my fallen comrades. In my left hand I carried something I wanna show Raphael: a demon's head. He was a great warrior, but he was also the head of research department and a chief healer. He would certainly be able to make use of my little souvenir.

When I arrived in front of the door leading to Raphael's working chamber and was about to open it, the door suddenly flung open from the inside, revealing the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. She had a pair of dazzling dark blue eyes and cherry red lips. Her straight black hair was neatly tied on her back, accentuating her long neck. When she saw me she gasped in horror, shocked by my bloody appearance. Then she quickly bowed down saying "forgive me" and "excuse me" before she hurriedly walked pass me.

I was still standing, mesmerized, when Raphael called me and asked me to come in. I quickly brushed off the girl's image from my thought. What a distraction.

"Back from a battle?" Raphael greeted me. He sat in a chair in front of a long table full of experiment instruments. "You have something for me, I guess?"

I nodded and put down the demon's head on the table. Raphael wore his spectacles and carefully examined the head. "that bastard and some of his friends shape-shifted into trees." I told him, "they ambushed my troops when we're passing the woods. I lost two of my best generals."

"is that so.." Raphael seemed interested. This was the first time we knew about demons who could shape-shift. He turned his head towards me again. "thank you for your information, Mikael. And I'm terribly sorry for your losses."

I just nodded my head again. Casualties in war were inevitable. "I'll go now." I turned around and walked back towards the door. I could hear Raphael told me to have a good rest before I shut the door. But I

wouldn't be doing that. I was too angry to get some rest. I knew I would spend tonight slashing straw dummies on the training ground.

[Lunalea POV]

That was quite a shock! It's been four months since I've become a fully-trained healer, but never before I'd seen so much blood. I felt stupid when I was back in my room, I should have asked that man whether or not he's injured. 'What kind of healer I am!' I snapped myself.

That man..I thought I knew who he was. I'd heard about him; fiery red toussled hair, black eyes, tall and strong figure..he must be Lord Mikael, one of the four great generals—supposedly the strongest one. The maids and female healers were talking about him all the time. There's actually a fierce competition amongst the maids about who should serve in Lord Mikael's palace. The female healers weren't so lucky, because he almost never came to the infirmary. It's not like he's never injured; he's just too arrogant to have medical treatment unless he's bleeding to death. It's also his arrogancy which made him refuse to be

placed a protection ward. Well, I thought that was a bit selfish of him. He should value his life more; this kingdom would suffer a big loss if he's gone.

Ah, enough about him. I doubted I would meet him again anyway. I should have some rest now, it's been quite a day.

[Mikael POV]

It's nearly dawn when I left the training ground and headed back to my chamber, sweats covering all of my body. I still hadn't got enough. I needed to fight more, I needed to kill more demons. I had no time to rest.

"You're finally back, Mika. I'm bored to death waiting for you." A female voice greeted me as soon as I entered my chamber.

I frowned in disapproval when I saw who was already in my bed, plain naked. Gabriel. One of a few female warriors in this kingdom. She was also, amazingly, one of the four great generals. And from the beginning she had made it clear that she wanted to sleep with me, or to be precise, she wanted to have

a child from me; a strong, powerful child, the outspring of two great generals. So far she hadn't succeeded, and her patience was running out.

"Should I put guards on my door?" I said sarcastically, walking over to a table with a stone basin full of cold water on it. I splashed some water on to my face.

Gabriel chuckled. "You know that cannot stop me." She replied. I heard some rustles, muffled footsteps, and the next thing I knew, she'd already stood behind me. My body went stiff when she wrapped her arms around my naked torso, resting her head on my back. Her wavy blond hair tickled. "Just give up already.." she whispered sweetly, "You won't lose anything."

'Yes, I will' I thought bitterly, 'My pride'. She wanted to use me, and I hated it. I pulled myself from her and stepped away. Then I turned to face her. I wanted her to know that she couldn't intimidate me, or seduce me, with her body. "Get out." I said coldly, "And stay out." She glared at me. I glared back. 'I won't lose to this woman.'

“Fine!” she retorted, “But you will succumb to me finally.” Gabriel turned around and walked away angrily, slamming the door after her.

I sighed. I couldn’t stay here much longer. As soon as the dawn broke, I would be out to the battlefield once more.

<that’s it for the first part. I hope you enjoy it. Please review and tell me whether or not you like it. thanks for reading...>

Chapter 2

[pt.2] The Cure

Part 2

[Lunalea POV]

I was reading an old book about the early ages of the kingdom when I heard a commotion outside my working chamber. A moment later, there's a hard knock on my door. I got up at the same time the door swung open. And there stood Lord Mikael, again covered in blood. I gasped and automatically bowed down. Then I remembered he might be injured, so I rushed towards him, but he already stepped inside and sat down on a chair. He looked annoyed, his face was dark, but he didn't say anything.

“My Lord—“ I began.

“Ma’am.” Said someone. I turned and was surprised to see another warrior—a general, judging from his armor. I didn’t notice he was there; he must had been standing behind Lord Mikael. I was about to ask him whether he’s injured when he said nervously, “Could you please take a look at Lord Mikael, Ma’am?”

I turned back to Lord Mikael. ‘So he is injured!’ I thought to myself. “Excuse me, My Lord..” I said carefully, remembering that he had a high pride, “Could you show me where you’ve been wounded?”

Lord Mikael growled. Now I could tell that he hated the fact that he had to come to the infirmary, but it also meant that his wounds were serious. He still didn’t say anything and I was getting worried, when he suddenly took off his armor and his top. I held my breath when I caught sight of his muscular chest, and I blushed. ‘Why should I blush? This is not the first time I see a man’s bare chest!’

I quickly got over myself and searched for any wound on his torso. His front was fine, now his back…I gasped again when I found a long nasty cut

across his back. It's still bleeding. I grabbed a clean cloth and a bowl of warm water I had always prepared to clean his wound. His body went rigid, it must hurt so much, but Lord Mikael didn't even flinched. Let alone groaning in pain.

"What happened?" I asked the general (I figured Lord Mikael wouldn't want to answer that). He's still standing nearby, watching me work. Perhaps he wanted to make sure his chief got treated well.

"Well.." he glanced nervously at Lord Mikael. "My Lord slightly underestimated the opponent, that's all." Whew, that's vague.

"I was being careless." growled Lord Mikael, surprising both me and the general. He said nothing else then and seemed furious to himself. I didn't pose anymore question and did my job in silence. After his wound's clean, I healed it with my power. The general stared in amazement as the wound sealed itself.

"Done." I declared a few minutes later, looking proudly at my neat work. Lord Mikael got up at once. "wait." I stopped him. I rushed to my desk and took a

red bottle. “Please drink this tonic, My Lord.” I handed the bottle to Lord Mikael, who accepted it reluctantly. “And please have a lot of rest..it means you shouldn’t wield your blade for at least one week, My Lord.”

Lord Mikael looked at me in disbelief, as if I was telling him to drink a deadly posion. “You’re kidding.” He growled.

I gulped. He sure was scary. “No..Please, just follow my instruction, My Lord, unless your wound won’t be healed completely.” I implored. He grunted in dislike, then he just turned around and left. Unbelievable!

“Umh..please forgive My Lord’s manner.” Said the general, picking up the armor Lord Mikael left behind.

I smiled at him and said, “I don’t mind it.” I thought I saw the general’s face went slightly red. Was he sick? “Do you need any medicine? You don’t look so well yourself.” I asked him.

“Oh…Oh! No, Ma’am..” he shook his head frantically. “Pray excuse me.” He staggered to leave the chamber, leaving me puzzled.

[Mikael POV]

This is such a shame, a disgrace! How could I let my guard down and get wounded?! I was so angry to myself. I hated to go to the infirmary, and to made matter worse, my stupid general Neil brought me to that girl’s working chamber! I should have known; he was practically drooling over her. Now what would she thought about me? She must be thinking that I was a foolish man and I deserved this wound because I didn’t even bother to have a ward placed in the first place. Damn.

I felt like I was grounded. One week without my sword? What should I do to spend the time? This was unbelievable. Where should I channel all of my energy? Sword and fighting and battles were all I got to distract me from..unnecessary things. Ugh, I was so glad to know that Gabriel was away on the battlefield. I wasn’t sure if I could decline her if she came to me now. Damn hormones.

I spent the first day sleeping. I hadnt realized how tired my body was before I hit the bed. When was the last time I had a good sleep? I might have pushed my body over the limit, and it protested. The second day, I walked around the castle aimlessly. I just followed where my feet led me; and they apparently led me to the training ground. My hands itched when I watched several warriors training.

“Mikael, what are you doing here?”

I turned around and saw Raphael walking towards me.

“You’re not thinking about joining them, are you?” he asked again.

“uhm..” somehow I felt like a child caught stealing.

Raphael went on, “Lunalea told me that you should rest for at least one week and she asked me to keep an eye on you.”

“Luna—? Oh, you mean the healer.” So her name was Lunalea. Such a nice name. “Well, I don’t like following her advice, but I guess my body really need some rest.” I said to him.

“Good.” Raphael smiled. “I trust that you will stay true to your words.”

“I’m a man of my words.” I assured him. Raphael seemed satisfied and offered me to go with him to the library. I refused his offer and went back to my palace.

The third day I spent polishing my swords and armors. This task hardly kept my mind from wandering off. And I wasn’t too surprised to find myself thinking about the girl, Lunalea. She was indeed attractive, but there’s something else about her that I could not explain. I never thought about any girl like this before. I wondered what’s going on with me. Maybe there’s something wrong with my head. Maybe I should ask her to fix it..

The fourth day, I couldn’t take it any longer. I needed to see her.

[Lunalea POV]

It’s getting late. I was too engrossed in reading that I didn’t notice the time. I slammed the book in front of me close and put it back to the shelf. I should get

back to my chamber, and maybe pay a little visit to the kitchen to grab some food.

Suddenly there's a knock on the door. Loud and firm. Was somebody sick or injured? "come in." said I. The door opened and a man stepped inside. The least man I could think of seeing: Lord Mikael. He looked stunning in black outfit and a red velvet cape. I stumbled to give him a bow. "My Lord." I addressed him. "How can I be of assistance?"

"I brought you this." He showed me a basket containing some bread and a bottle of milk.

My jaw dropped open in astonishment. Then I quickly closed my mouth, blushing. I saw the corner of his mouth twitched, was he smiling? I took the basket hesitantly, murmuring, "Thank you, My Lord." How did he know I hadn't have dinner? He really surprised me. Then I was even startled and confused when he sat down and made himself comfortable.

He looked at me who's still standing looking at him and said, slightly annoyed, "sit and eat."

It sounded like a command to me, so I did what I was told. I took a bread and slowly began munching. I offered him some, but he just shook his head. I looked down, didn't dare to look at Lord Mikael's face, but I took a glimpse once or twice. He was staring at me intently. I was wondering the whole time about why he was here actually. It couldn't be just to give me some food, could it? So what did he want from me? I was really anxious.

After I was done with my meal, Lord Mikael asked, "How was it, the food?"

"It was good, My Lord, thank you.." I answered. He nodded in a satisfied manner. I hesitated for a few moments, but I decided to have a go at it. "My Lord, forgive me for asking..but why are you here actually?"

"Hm..you tell me." He said.

"I, My Lord?"

"Yes. You're the one who told me to rest for one week. I was bored to death. I demand you give me something to cure my boredom."

“forgive me, My Lord..but it’s for your own good..” I was sincerely apologetic. “And forgive me because I cannot think of any medicine that can possibly cure your boredom, My Lord..”

Lord Mikael looked rather amused. “Well, think of something.” He got up from the chair and walked up to me. I held my breath. From up close, he looked intimidating and also breathtaking. His black eyes made me want to drown in them and lost forever. “think of something, Lunalea.” He repeated; his voice was deep and strong. Somehow I liked the way he said my name..oh no, what’s happening to me? “think of something, because I think I’m going crazy.”

I yelped when he suddenly yanked me from my chair and pushed me to the wall. He stood very close, I was sure he could hear my heart beating very fast. I couldn’t escape; there’s no use trying anyway. He’s far too strong.

“My Lord…?” my voice was weak, it sounded like a whimper. His face was dangerously close to mine. This proximity was overwhelming. I felt my lips trembled in anticipation. Then suddenly, without

warning, he pressed his lips upon mine. The kiss was rough at first, but then it became tender. He slowly ran his tongue on my lower lip, silently asking for me to open my mouth. I refused. His hand suddenly grabbed my waist and I gasped. He used the opportunity to slip his tongue in. it felt warm and… good. Oh, my God, what was I thinking? I must be losing my head.

After what seemed like forever, Lord Mikael finally released me. I was panting, my face felt hot, my body trembled and my legs went weak. If he's not holding me with both hands, I was sure I would had fallen to the floor. I struggled to look at him. "Why..?" I asked him, confused.

Lord Mikael smiled a little. This was actually the first time I saw him smiling, and it was beautiful. "You are the cure, Lunalea.." he whispered in my ear. I blushed even redder. I didn't know what to say. I didn't know whether he's serious or he's just playing with me. But somewhere in my mind, a voice said it didn't matter.

“Can you stand up?” he asked after a while. I nodded slowly, I was quite steady, though my heart’s still in a frenzy. “okay.” He let go of his hands, and I was surprised that I missed his touch already. “I’ll see you tomorrow.” He said before he walked away, leaving me puzzled with all these thoughts and weird feelings. Was I dreaming?? I pinched my arm. It hurted, so that meant it’s real! Oh my God.

I went over to the table and grabbed a bottle of green liquid. It was a calming potion; this should do the trick. I drank two bottles of that potion before I retreated to my chamber. I dreamt of Lord Mikael that night.

Chapter 3

[pt.3] The Inappropriate Deed

Part 3

[Mikael]

Actually, I intended to let her go if Lunalea pushed me away or showed any form of struggle. But she didn't. For a split second I wondered why she didn't, but then all I could think of was her lips; her sweet and soft lips. I tried so hard not to take her innocence right there and right then. God! Why did You create such an irresistible creature!

I wanted to savour the taste of Lunalea's lips as long as I could, but I knew if I kissed her any longer, I would definitely lose control. So I retreated, though

my whole body screaming NO. I could tell when I looked into her eyes that she was confused by my action, but I was confused too. And I didn't know what to say to her; I ended up saying a stupid thing like "You're the cure..", what kind of line was that! But then again, she blushed upon hearing this, how adorable. I felt the urge to kiss her again, but no, no, no..not now, at least. I better go now before I did anything more stupid.

I walked briskly away from the infirmary. My blood was still rushing into my head, making it hot and I couldn't think straight. I was kinda frustated, and in frustation I went to the training ground. I took off my upper clothes and picked up a sword from the weapon rack. I began practising my moves. My back hurted like hell and I could feel the wound ripped open because of my moves, I could feel the blood trickling down. I ignored it. The pain helped me clear my mind.

I practiced for a few hours, then I went back to my chamber. I didn't bother to put back my upper clothes, and simply dropped them on the floor as

soon as I was in my room. I drank the remaining tonic Lunalea gave me before I hit my bed, facing downward—because I didn't want to stain the bed with the blood on my back. I quickly drifted off to sleep. I had a dreamless sleep and I woke up just before dawn. The blood on my back had dried and it felt so sticky, unfomcortable. At once I decided to see her..

My open wound became a justification for me to see Lunalea. Deep inside I was a little worried, which was so not like me. What would she think if she saw it? I had wasted her work, I disobeyed her instruction. Now she had to clean the bloody mess I made.

The guards to the Raphael's palace allowed me to get through, they even bowed before me. Perhaps they thought I was going to see Raphael. I frankly didn't know where Lunalea's chamber was, so I looked around for a passing maid and asked for direction. The maid, a relatively young girl, who woke up early to do some morning chores, stuttered when she told me what I wanted to know. She looked afraid of me,

but that's normal, I was used to it. I knew most of the time I could be so intimidating. The maid scurried away after giving away the information. It was then that I realized I was bare-chest. I grunted, no wonder the maid could hardly keep her eyes off of my torso. Whatever.

I was in front of the door to Lunalea's chamber now. It's too late to go back. It's not that I wanted to cancel my plan anyway. I raised my knuckle and knocked firmly three times. I waited a few moments before the door was opened. I couldn't help it; I was astonished to see her appearance.

Naturally, Lunalea looked startled to see me coming so early. But then what I didn't expect was her next reaction: she giggled nervously. "What's so funny?" I asked her, my mouth twitched trying to hold back a smile.

"Oh..forgive me, My Lord.." she said merrily, "It's just that..I'm wondering if I was still dreaming, or if you walked out of my dream.."

I raised an eyebrow. She dreamt about me? It made me curious..

Lunalea's eyes widened when she realized what she had said. her hand flew over to her mouth. She gasped. "Oh no..that's just..that's inappropriate! Please forgive me, My Lord.." she plead.

I smiled warmly and leaned on the door frame. "Will you ever invite me to come in?" I asked her.

"Oh..I would like to, but My Lord, that would be—"

"Inappropriate?" I continued her line. She nodded weakly. "This is emergency. My back is bleeding." I made myself sounded grave.

"Oh!" Lunalea exclaimed, looking horrified. "If that's the case, then I guess it's alright…" she opened to door wide for me.

"thank you" I said, stepping in.

She bid me to sit on the edge of the bed, because she had no chair in her chamber. I did so, and watched her as she took some equipments from a cupboard. She then sat behind me and hissed in disapproval when she saw my wound. Carefully she clean it for the second time. My skin grew warm in places she touched. I told myself to remain calm and logical. But

it’s difficult! With her body clad only in a thin layer of fabric they called a night gown. Lunalea didn’t asked me why the wound ripped open again. Perhaps she saw it coming; perhaps she already guessed that I would eventually disobey her instruction.

Lunalea ran her finger across the cut, healing it with her power. I felt a tickling sensation when the wound sealed itself. When she had done with her task, she handed me a flask, asked me to drink it all in order to boost up the healing process. I thought to myself, ‘hey, why didn’t she give me this the last time?’ while drinking the cool liquid in the flask. I suddenly felt light-headed. My energy seemed to be seeping out, my vision blurred. I saw Lunalea stood in front of me and gently pushed me to lay down. I was feeling too weak to move any muscle in my body. I tried to speak but my mouth wouldn’t open. Ah..the sheet felt cool and soft against my aching back. The last thing I remembered was Lunalea whispering “forgive me, My Lord..” softly in my ear before I passed out.

<sorry this part is a short one, I’m kinda having difficulty while writing it..I kept thinking that I’m

missing smthn, but I dunno what..aaargh. Anyway, what do you think will happen to Lord Mikael next? tehehe.. tell me if you have anything in mind about this story..and lotsa thanks for reading..!!>

Chapter 4

[pt.4] The Innocence-Taking

Part 4

[Lunalea POV]

It was surreal.. I wasn't even sure that it's the real Lord Mikael who stood before my door. And why he was bare-chest? He looked so sexy, I wondered how it would feel to have him—hah! What was I thinking? That's inappropriate! He's here to have a medical treatment for God's sake.

I sighed, I knew that he would make his wound ripped open again sooner or later. This time I had to take desperate measure to force him to rest. So I gave him my special mix of sleeping potion. Normally a

person would instantly pass out after one or two gulps, but Lord Mikael was not a normal person, so I had him drink the entire content of the flask. And it worked.

I felt rather guilty when I watched him pass out, but this was the only way to force him to rest. I eyed his figure admirably while he's sleeping. Such a lewd pose...I thought absent-mindedly. As if in a trance, I slowly ran my fingers on his broad hard chest that slightly rose and fell due to his breathing. His skin was honey-colored and felt surprisingly smooth, except for some scars here and there. I traveled down to his perfectly-toned stomach, then drew my hand abruptly when I realized what I was doing. My face went red in embarassment. I pulled a blanket over Lord Mikael's torso, then I got up and got ready to go to the infirmary. I glanced at him once more before I left my chamber.

My day in the infirmary was banal. I didn't have many patients and most of them were young warriors who needed to have their wounds sealed. My thoughts keep flying back to my chamber, to the

figure on my bed, and I would blush uncontrollably. I told myself that Lord Mikael might probably had regain his consciousness and left my place. Then I wondered if he got angry for what I did, that in any second he could bust in and shout at me. I got nervous and kinda scared. But he didn't come to the infirmary.

At the end of the day, I went to the dining hall to have dinner before I got back to my chamber. I glanced at the table on the far side of the hall, slightly raised from the floor. There are five chairs there; the high chair in the middle was intended for the king, but he hardly ever eat in the hall; the two chairs on the right were occupied by Lord Raphael and Lady Gabriel, but the two on the left were empty—one chair belonged to Lord Uriel, who was always empty, and the other one was Lord Mikael's..So he's not here. Was he still in my chamber, still sleeping—did I overdose him? Or was he back to his palace? If he's still in my chamber, should I bring him some food for dinner? I mulled over the thought while I was eating my soup.

Fifteen minutes later, I was on my way back to my chamber with a tray on my hand. I brought a bowl of soup, some bread, and a cup of wine.

"Good evening, Luna." A gentle, melodic voice greeted me. I was surprised and nearly dropped the tray.

"Lord Raphael.." I gasped. I'd been thinking about Lord Mikael the whole day and somehow I felt guilty when I saw Lord Raphael.

Lord Raphael, who looked shining, as usual, in his bluish white robe, smiled and said, "Let's walk together. You're heading back to your chamber, I suppose?"

"Yes, sure, My Lord." I nodded and smiled back. So we walked together to his palace in the eastern side of the castle. A few healers and I, who didn't have any relative, actually lived in Lord Raphael's palace.

After a few minutes walk in silence, Lord Raphael gave a questioning look at my tray. "Ah..this." I struggled to come up with an excuse; I surely wouldn't tell him about Lord Mikael who might still

be in my chamber. "I plan to finish reading some books, My Lord..and sometimes I get hungry in the middle of the night.." I lied, the feeling of guilty tormented me.

"I see." Lord Raphael nodded and smiled. Then he talked about some experiments he's been doing, about a demon who could shape-shift. I had little knowledge in that matter, so I just mostly nodded when he asked for my opinion.

At last we arrived at the palace and Lord Raphael bid me good night before he headed back to his own chamber while I strode towards my chamber. I paused for a while in front of my door. I took a deep breath before I opened the door and hesitantly stepped in. At once I looked at my bed. I sighed when I found it empty. A part of me felt relief, and a part of me felt disappointed. Relief because I wasn't sure my heart was ready for him—it thrummed like mad whenever he's close to me—, and disappointed because...never mind! What did I actually expect from him anyway?? I thought bitterly.

I strolled in and put the tray on the table, telling myself once again that Lord Mikael's gone.

Or not.

I gasped when suddenly a pair of arms grabbed my waist and pulled me so that my back was pressed against a hard muscular chest. "What's bothering your mind?" a rough voice whispered in my ear, tickling it. My heart skipped a beat and I was at a loss for words. "You didn't realize I was behind you?" he sneered.

"M-My Lord! I thought you were—" I stuttered.

"Do you know you made me angry, lady?" he ignored me and wrapped his arms tighter around my torso. I gasped again, shaking my head weakly. "You sly..you caught me off guard with that sleeping potion of yours..and when I woke up you were nowhere to be seen..I was really angry you know."

"But—" I tried to defend myself.

"But you know I'd still be here." He cut short. I guessed he saw the tray. "That's why you brought some food. Right?" I just nodded. It's useless if I tried

to speak again anyway. "How nice of you." I felt him smirked against my ear, "But I'm not hungry. At least, not hungry for food..."

My eyes widened in shocked because of the tone of his voice..it's lustful. Then, in one swift motion, he lifted up my body. I yelped and automatically wrapped my arms around his neck. Lord Mikael gave me a sly smile. He brought me over to my bed and laid me down. He trapped me between his arms, I couldn't move. My pulse began to pick up speed. What would he do to me? I thought frantically, though somehow I'd already known the answer..

Lord Mikael stared straight into my eyes, locking my gaze. His black eyes were ablazed. I gulped. I put both hands on his chest, realizing that he's still bare-chest. 'such an exhibitionist..' I thought absent-mindedly. Suddenly he bent down and began kissing me fiercely. I thought about the possibility of escaping from him. Zero. I tried to push him half-heartedly. A futile attempt. Might as well gave up trying.

Lord Mikael was not kissing me—he's devouring my lips. I could hardly breathe. What was this feeling I was feeling? I was so absorbed in his passionate kiss I could barely feel his right hand roaming over my body. He ran his calloused fingers over my shoulder blade and tore off my gown. A soft moaning escaped my slightly-parted lips when he securely wrapped his fingers around my naked breast. Lord Mikael lifted up his face and grinned. I gasped for air; my face must be blushing really red right now.

"My Lord, please.." I begged him, though I wasn't sure whether I was begging him to stop or begging him to continue. He took it as the latter, and he dived his face onto the crook of my neck, nibbling it gently. My hand went up to his shoulders, then over to the back of his neck. Lord Mikael ran his tongue over my skin, from my neck down to my breast. I whimpered when I felt his hot breath over my hardened peak. A second later it was enveloped in his mouth. My back arched. I moaned, running my fingers through his fiery red locks. This was too much! My entire body felt hot, burning in desire. I had never felt like this before.

After a while, Lord Mikael tired of his ministration and impatiently ripped open the rest of my gown, throwing it onto the floor. I was plainly exposed before his eyes and felt anxious when he eyed me intently. He smiled and kissed my cheek gently, whispering "You're beautiful." My cheeks blushed. I was so embarrased that I closed my eyes.. When I opened them again, Lord Mikael had hovered above me, his trousers were already discarded. He bent down to kiss me again. I felt something hard pressed against my thighs. My body suddenly went stiff, I was scared..

Lord Mikael realized this, and he whispered softly, "do not resist me, Lunalea.." it was more like a plea rather than an order. It occurred to me that he'd been treating me as gentle as he could with all those big hard muscles. I realized he could have crushed me under his body.

I felt my body softened when he's slowly rubbing my thighs and spreading my legs apart. I looked at him and held my breath. This was it; the point of no return. I wasn't hating him, but I didn't know if I love

him. Lord Mikael would have me, simply because he wanted it. My feelings got nothing to do with it. And I knew, either I surrender or he could have me with force, that would inflict much more pain to me.

As soon as Lord Mikael knew I was relaxing, he thrust. He was doing it slowly, but it felt like I was being ripped in half. I managed to stifled my scream, but I couldn't stop the tears running down my cheeks. It was my first time, and he was so big I felt like I was burned from the inside by his heat. He squirmed his way in slowly. And slowly did the pain subside. After that, pleasure was all I felt. It surprised me that Lord Mikael made love to me in such a gentleness that made me forget he's a warchief.

He went slowly at first, then faster. We were both breathing heavily. I was unconsciously digging my nails on his back when I remembered about his wound, so I moved my hands down to his waist. I felt like there's a tight knot inside me, and it got tighter and tighter by each stroke Lord Mikael gave me. And then..I reached the peak, crying out his name. Something inside me exploded. He groaned and

pressed his forehead against my shoulder. I barely felt something hot and sticky running down my thighs.

Lord Mikael rolled over to my side, hardly panting, while I was like a fish out of the water. I was sweating all over, and I felt like all of my bones were shattered. In every breath I drew, my mind got clearer. And when it got clear, I rolled to one side, leaving my back against Lord Mikael. Then I cried in silence.

<okay, i know i'm not good at writing romance, but i'm trying..^^ so..tell me what you have in mind, and thanks for reading..!>

Chapter 5

[pt.5] The Sacred Marriage

Part 5

[Lunalea POV]

I was crying. At first I thought I would be fine with this; that I understood if Lord Mikael was just playing with me. But I was wrong. Right now I was far from fine. The thought of me being used only to satisfy his need somehow hurted me so much. And the fact that I had lost something precious I couldn't get back..Well, a part of me knew I wouldn't mind giving it for him, but I would be seriously offended if he took it for nothing..

"Lunalea?" I heard Lord Mikael called me. Then I felt him placing his warm hand on my shoulder. "Does it still hurt?" he asked me. His voice sounded..concerned..? I wasn't sure.

[Mikael POV]

I was tortured by the mixture of pleasure, guilt, and pain. She was a virgin. In this kingdom, virginity was highly valued and I felt guilty because I took it from her. Why she didn't told me earlier..?

'then what?' a voice inside my head sneered, 'What would you do if she had told you earlier? Would you have stopped? Could you strain yourself?'

No, I thought bitterly. I wouldn't have stopped. I was so into her; her sweet scent, her silky smooth skin, her velvety voice..How thrilled I was when she's screaming my name in satisfaction. It sounded so..right. Perhaps she didn't realize it, but she got me so captivated I even felt sorry for myself.

But then..what about her feelings?

As I laid beside her thinking about all this, Lunalea rolled over to one side and laid with her back facing

me. "Lunalea?" I called her. I rendered my hand and placed it on her shoulder as gentle as I could. I could feel her body slightly trembling. "Does it still hurt?" I asked her, deeply concerned. Was I too rough?

Lunalea didn't say anything and I got slightly irritated. "Luna-" I yanked her gently so I could see her face. Then I froze in shock; she's crying! Why was she crying? When I realized it must be me who caused her crying, I felt like I wanted to beat myself up.

"Why did you do this to me..?" she finally said, sobbing, "why me? You can have any woman, My Lord, but why did you pick me? What am I to you?" she questioned, her eyes searching for answers in mine.

I caressed her fair face. "I don't know.." I uttered the most honest answer I could think of, "you're just impossible not to love.." Her brows furrowed slightly. What could I say? I knew I was terrible in expressing my feelings. Hell, this was even the first time I had feelings like this. Let alone expressing it. All I knew

was that I wanted to have her by my side and to protect her..

That's it! Suddenly an idea popped in my head. I smiled proudly to myself. That would do..

[Lunalea POV]

What was Lord Mikael trying to say? I really didn't understand him..

All of a sudden he bit his thumb until it bled. I gasped, but before I could react more, he pressed his bleeding thumb against my chest, just right above my heart, then solemnly and clearly stated an oath: "May God be my witness. From now onward, I , Mikael, claim Lunalea to be my one and only wife. Shall I betray her or intend to betray her, let my heart stop beating and my soul burned in hell." He pulled back his thumb. I looked down and was amazed to see the trace of his blood on my skin glowed red, then it slowly formed the insignia of a sacred marriage.

I stared back at Lord Mikael's eyes with dumb-stricken face. I was utterly and totally shocked. I couldn't believe he's performing the ritual of a sacred

marriage! I'd read about this somewhere in a book; this ritual was one of the ancient magic-simple yet very powerful. The sacred marriage guaranteed the loyalty of two lovers, and it could not be broken unless one of them died. It's because the insignia was actually a hex that would strike at the heart of the bearer if he/she cheated on his/her spouse.

Why would Lord Mikael risked his life just to have me, I wondered. Perhaps he would just kill me once he got bored of me. Or perhaps..he simply..loved me..

Lord Mikael stared at me, waiting for me to complete the ritual. Either I was just delighting myself, or it is really affection I saw in his eyes..along with anticipation and anxiety. I felt a nice warmth growing inside me. Still staring intently into his eyes, I brought my thumb upon my lips and bit it, wincing at the pain. Like what he did, I pressed my bleeding thumb on his chest, stating the oath: "May God be my witness. From now onward, I , Lunalea, claim Mikael to be my one and only husband. Shall I betray him or intend to betray him, let my heart stop beating and my soul burned in hell."

Now that the ritual had been completed, the blood insignia sunk in, forming a kind of visible permanent vermillion tatoo; a mark.

Lord Mikael smiled blissfully. He took my hand and gently kissed its back, sending a shiver down my shine-a nice one. "My Lady." He addressed me.

Confusion struck me once more. "why..why..-" I stuttered, gulping, "are you jesting, My Lord..? are you playing me for a fool?" I whispered carefully, afraid that he'd be mad.

He frowned his temple. "Do not mock me, Lunalea." He said firmly, sounded a bit offended. "yet, you're not wrong to be suspicious of me." He added.

"Forgive me.." I pleaded with a weak voice.

"Mmh." He mumbled, placing his hand on my cheek. "You may think whatever you want, but what's done is done. This insignia is the proof. You belong to me now." He leaned forward, slowly breathing his every word upon my wavering lips, "And I, to you."

He..belongs..to me..? Oh God. This was overwhelming. I meant, he's a great general, he's respected and

feared by all. While I? I was just a mere healer.. I should know my place, but his words..the sincerity in his words was enough to send me to cloud nine. My heartbeat accelerated again; I swore if this continued I would die of heart attack.

Speechless, I buried my face on his chest-I was surprised by my own boldness. I indulged myself with his warmth, and he began to gently stroke my hair, making me sleepy. I was tired. And I was sleepy. Lord Mikael whispered something I could not hear clearly. 'Yes, I love you too..' I thought instinctively before I drifted off to a deep slumber.

<Okay. What do you think?? ^-^ what will happen next to this newly wed? Please comment..lemme kno' what you think about this story. And thanks a lot for reading!!>

Chapter 6

[pt.6] The First Dream

Part 6

[Lunalea POV]

I was standing at the precipice of a crater. Before me was a pool of lava, bubbling and glowing red-orange—it reminded me of Lord Mikael's fiery hair. I had never gone to a volcano before, and seeing it up-close indeed made me gaze in awe. I didn't know what I was doing here, apart from being enthralled by this magnificent sight. But I simply didn't care, I felt like I could just stood there staring into the lava forever. I would never get tired by this beauty..

Then I felt two hands placed on my back, and before I could sound a protest, I was pushed forward. I screamed in panic; I fell into a crater! I moved my limbs frantically, as if it could do me any good, when I knew—unless if I had a pair of wings—I was doomed.

I closed my eyes a few seconds before I hit the lava. I held my breath and braced myself.

I thought my body was going to melt instantly, but the thick liquid that began to envelop me was not at all hot. On the other hand, it felt cold like quicksilver. Strange.

Alright, perhaps I wasn't melting, but I was still slowly drowning and soon enough breathing became the issue. My lungs screamed for air, I felt them as well as my throat burned.

Suddenly I reached a rough bottom. My feet touched it first, before I fell on all four, gasping and choked. Then I realized the pressure all around me was no more, replaced by a chilly dead atmosphere. I shivered, but nevermind, the most important of all was that I could breathe again. I was still alive!

I gathered my courage and opened my eyes. But I couldn't see anything except the darkness. I tried to look around around. Nothing but pitch black. I waved my hand in front of my face; no, I couldn't even see my own hand. I shut my eyes tightly for a minute, then opened them again. Still dark. 'Am I blind?' I thought gravely. Panic began to attack me.

A voice in my head told me this was just a dream and all I had to do was wake up.

'wake up,…..' I heard a faint whisper in my ear. Eh? What did it call me? 'wake up!'

Suddenly I felt a very strong pull on my stomach, making me sick. My head throbbed and I was fainting..

Then I woke up, perplexed. 'such a weird dream I was having' I thought. I looked up and found myself staring at a familiar ceiling. My chamber. I sighed in relief and slowly sat up. Eh? Why was I naked? Memories of last night was pouring into my head and I felt my cheeks flaming. Lord Mikael! I turned my head to my side, but it was empty. He must had left. I

noticed the food had gone too. I sighed again. Well, I didn't know how to react if he was still here anyway..

I looked down and automatically ran my finger over the red insignia on my chest. I stared at it in reverent silence. Its design was complex and beautiful, yet it was deadly.. 'Oh God, I'm a wife..' I thought in amazement, 'a wife to the strongest warrior in this kingdom!' then another thought occurred: 'If the maids and the female healers found out about this, no doubt they would start trying to smuggle hex bags into my chamber..'

[Mikael POV]

Lunalea was still sleeping when I woke up. It's still dark outside. I laid still long enough to watch her blissful lovely face. 'My wife..' I thought, and smiled to myself. For the first time in my life I felt so content, like there's nothing else I wanted in this life, like nothing matters to me except this gorgeous lady. I felt like I had never known hatred or vengeance; the purity and innocence in Lunalea's aura must have been affecting me.

I kissed Lunalea's forehead gently, careful not to wake her up, then I got out of bed and put on my clothes. I ate the meal she brought for me last night. The soup was cold already, but still tasted good.

After the meal, I left the room. I didn't want to, but I had already overstayed—I thought of the cost I had to pay. I walked briskly towards my palace and didn't meet anyone on my way there except for a few guards on sentry duty. Once in my room, I cleaned myself as best as I could and changed my clothes.

I needed to see Raphael and told him about me and Lunalea. If there's anyone who deserved to know first, its him. He was like her guardian, knowing that she had no relatives. Well, she had me now. I would ask her to be moved to my palace. I wondered what would Raphael say about this. Perhaps he would be mad at me, telling me I was reckless for peforming the ritual of sacred marriage without any deep thought or consideration.

Suddenly there's a knock on my door, cutting my train of thoughts. I growled, "Come in!"

A messenger stepped inside cautiously and made a bow before me.

“What is it?” I asked him.

“The King wishes to see you, Lord Mikael.” He answered.

I frowned. This was unlikely. “What does he want to see me for?”

“The King only said this is an urgent matter.”

<uh-oh. What does the King want? Wait for the next part ‘kay. Thanks a lot for your comment and vote; they really brighten up my day =D And thanks for reading of course!!>

Chapter 7

[pt.7] The Determined Ones

Part 7

[Lunalea POV]

Autumn was coming. The day was windy and chilly, so I wore a shawl over my shoulders. I was heading for the infirmary, walking as fast as I could to brush off the cold. When I bumped into Lord Raphael. I nearly fell but he held my upper arms to make me steady. I gasped in surprise, then quickly backed away, bowing and saying, "Forgive me."

"It's alright." Lord Raphael smiled warmly. "Are you in a hurry?" he asked me.

"No, My Lord." I shook my head, "Do you need my assistance?"

"No, I'm just asking. Anyway, are you feeling alright? Your aura seems a bit different today."

I held my breath. "Different..in what way, My Lord?" I asked warily. The aura usually reflected a person's mood. I must admit that my mood today was more...lively than usual because of one particular person.

Lord Raphael was eyeing me intently. "I think it sparks a little red, instead of the usual calm blue." Uh-oh. I wondered if Lord Raphael knew more than I thought he knew. Should I tell him about Lord Mikael and me? But what if Lord Mikael didn't want anyone else know about the sacred marriage? It could probably ruin his image-as a strong, tough warrior.

"Uh.." again I must find an excuse. "Maybe it's because I tried to use an offensive spells.." I lied, for the second time, to Lord Raphael. I was so shameful..!

He just smiled in comprehension. "I understand if you are worried about the war, and I understand if

you feel the need to be prepared for battle." He gently said, "But I hope you're not too hard on yourself. Even if the war reaches this castle, I will protect you." And with that he lightly ran his finger over my hair, making me startled. I hoped he's not being nice to me..after what I had done..

"I..I am grateful, My Lord.." I said in a weak voice.

"Don't worry, Lunalea, this war will be over soon." He told me. And I was surprised with a stern determination in his usually serene eyes.

Later that day when I was in my working chamber, someone came to see me. No, it's not Lord Mikael, it's the general who accompanied him when he came the first time. I didn't know his name. "Can I help you?" I asked him "Are you sick or injured?"

"No, Ma'am." He answered, rather anxious. "Lord Mikael asks for you." He added. I sighed; I should had known.

"Would you tell Lord Mikael that I would see him at the end of the day, after I've done my duty?" I knew that Lord Mikael was a great general, and now he

was my husband, but I didn't work under his command. I worked for Lord Raphael and I'd already felt bad enough because I lied to him twice. I didn't want to leave my work now if I could help it. This is a reponsibility entrusted to me.

The general looked more anxious. "Ma'am, he asks for you right now." He insisted. "I am to escort you to his chamber."

'Sigh..guess I have no choice then.'

[Mikael POV]

I didn't like disturbing Lunalea at work, but I needed to see her at once. I had sent my general Neil to come to get her at the infirmary. I had to see her once more before I left-for how long I didn't know. Earlier that day the King requested for me due to an urgent matter. He told me he was informed that Lady Gabriel was in a trouble; her troop in the verge of destruction. Apparently she was facing an immense number of shapeshift demons. The King ordered me to come to her aid immediately.

I was sitting on my chair, polishing my sword, when there's a knock on my door. Finally. What took them so long? I didn't like to wait. After I said "Come in!", Neil brought inside the fairest lady in this kingdom. Yes, my wife, Lunalea. I was delighted to see her, even if she looked slightly annoyed.

"You may dismiss." I told Neil. He was hesitant, seemingly didn't like the idea of leaving Lunalea alone with me, in my chamber. "You heard me." I snapped. Neil nodded and hurriedly left the room. I gestured for Lunalea to come closer. She approached me and stood just about one meter away before me.

"You ask for me, My Lord?" Lunalea asked in her usual polite manner.

"Yes." I nodded. "I need you to make my cells regenerate faster. My wound has to be fully healed at least tonight." The look of shock in Lunalea's face was not unexpected.

"Are you going back to the battlefield, My Lord?" she asked me disapprovingly, glancing at the sword on the table. Was she upset because I left her shortly after I married her, or was she upset because once

again I put my life on the line? I decided it didn't matter; I'd have it either way.

I leaned forward and reached for her hand, pulling her closer to me. Her sweet scent invaded my nostril and made me feel calm and content. "I hate to leave you." I told her, while staring straight into her deep blue eyes, "But the King has ordered me himself." And I told her what the King had told me.

Lunalea inhaled deeply. "I understand." She said, drooping her head. "But I'm afraid I had to ask something from you, My Lord.." her voice was frail and cautious.

I became wary myself, but then I said, "Anything, My Lady.." what she could probably ask anyway?

Lunalea blushed a little. "I ask for your permission...to place a protective ward on you, My Lord..." her voice faltered when she saw my eyes slightly narrowed. "I-I don't mean to offend you, My Lord, I just-"

She didn't finish her sentence, because I suddenly wrapped my right arm around her waist and pressed

my head against her belly. I heard her gasp, and I chuckled. Actually, I was surprised I didn't feel that offended; instead I felt rather glad because I knew she care for me. "Fine." I whispered, just loud enough for her to hear, "Do as you see fit."

I was thrilled when I felt Lunalea's slender fingers ran through my hair, stroking it gently. It felt so good. "Thank you, My Lord." She whispered back before she bent down and placing a kiss on the top of my head. It made me happy that she took the initiative.

Approximately fifteen minutes later, Lunalea had done channeling her power to make my cells regenerate faster. Regeneration was not an enjoyable process. For some, it would feel like being pierced by thousands needles and most of the time this process caused a high fever. I told Lunalea that I could handle it, but she said merrily that I might not have to undergo that suffering because I wasn't most people. I smiled realizing that she meant it to be a compliment.

The next thing was the protective ward. I had never placed one before, so I didn't know the process. I

knew though, that the ward was usually carved into the skin like a kind of tattoo, like the insignia of sacred marriage. Lunalea placed the ward on my back, a few inches below my neck.

"Do you need anything else, My Lord?" Lunalea asked me.

"Yes." I held her wrist firmly, as if I would lose her if I let go. "You." Her eyes widened and her cheeks blushed pink, then she slowly nodded.

Lunalea still looked shy and a bit scared when I brought her to my bed. "I'll be gentle." I promised her. She placed her cool hand on my cheek and smiled. "I know.." she said. I took her hand and kissed its palm. I was grateful that the regeneration process only made my back itched and my body a bit fatigued. That didn't hold me back.

Soon enough I had her moaning and writhing under my touch. Her voice was like the sweetest music in my ears. This time she wasn't as passive as before; she moved her hips to match my move..and God it felt great. Judging from her blissful expression, I knew she enjoy this as much as I do. She's driving me

insane, but I knew I had to handle her with care because she's so delicate. It still amazed me how she could give me so much pleasure.

I closed my eyes and leaned down to indulge myself in her ecstatic scent. I felt her grip on my upper arm tightened as I went faster. Her ragged breath felt hot on my face. She was getting close, steadily bringing me with her. Then she was there, screaming my name, and I muffled her with a rough kiss. I gave her a few more powerful thrusts before waves of raptures washed over me and I heard myself grunt.

I moved my body from on top of her and laid by her side. She was panting and it took some time before her breath was back to normal. Then she turned to face me and smiled; I swore her eyes looked glowing. The glow of happiness, I hoped. I smiled back at her and gently brushed aside her hair from her temple. It was sticky with sweat, but I still thought it's lovely.

Lunalea snuggled up to me lovingly. We didn't say a word and were just enjoying the calm silence. I absent-mindedly ran my fingers up and down her

back-they glided smoothly on her silky skin-, thinking how lucky I am to have her.

We stayed like that for a good twenty minutes. I almost forgot that I had a duty to the kingdom. And when I remembered, I slowly moaned in dislike. "My Love," I called Lunalea. She looked up at me and was surprised I called her that, but she also looked pleased. "I have to go." I told her.

I saw a cloud in her eyes, but it's quickly gone. She nodded, saying "Yes, I understand.." she entangled herself from my arms as I sat up. Lunalea was sitting up too, but I, seeing her still exhausted, prevented her.

"Sleep here for tonight." I told her. She complied. I gave her a chaste kiss before I left.

Later that evening, as I was riding my stallion Red Hare out to the battlefield once more, I had a new determination within me. I would end this war, no matter what, and brought back a land of peace where Lunalea and I could live together in harmony.

***

owwright..,just about now Mikael is standing behind me, glaring at me with arms folded-so scary! Hey, in life you can't always get what you want, right? ^^; I'll reunite them, I promise! Meanwhile, review and comment please..I'd really like to know what you're thinking bout this story, 'kay..

Chapter 8

[pt.8] The Severe Headache

Part 8

Mikael died in the battlefield and Lunalea became a widow…

Nah, just kidding..I'm not that cruel; Mikael won't die….yet =p

***

[Lunalea POV]

Shotly after Lord Mikael left, I fell asleep and had that strange dream again. The cold lava, the darkness, and the whisper..They were more vivid than before. When I woke up I suffered from a

massive headache; the pain was excruciating. I drank the most effective potion I knew to cure a headache, but it's no use. The headache tortured me the whole day, rendering me unable to concentrate on my job.

That night I thought I could have a dreamless sleep because I was very tired. But it turned out I was wrong. The dream came again. And this time I could make out what the whisper had been calling me: Zeva.

The name sounded strangely familiar—somewhere, a long time ago, I'd heard that name. but I didn't remember.

In the morning, the headache struck; it's like someone was constantly drilling your skull. And in the night, the strange dream made my sleep restless. This combo made me exhausted and extremely weak. I missed Lord Mikael so much, if only he were here, he would help me get through this.

By the fourth day, I turned to Lord Raphael.

"Come in." answered the melodic voice when I knocked on Lord Raphael's door. I stepped inside his

working chamber. Lord Raphael turned from his desk and frowned when he looked at my face; the sign of weariness must be apparent.

I made a bow before saying, “Forgive me for bothering you, My Lord..but I have a favor to ask from you..”

“Don’t be so formal to me, Lunalea.” Replied Lord Raphael, flashing a gentle smile, “What do you need?”

I told him about my headache, and that I was wondering if he had something to cure it. Lord Raphael looked deeply concerned. “May I?” he gestured at my hand. I nodded and let him took my wrist to check my pulse. “It’s weak. Do you sleep well?” he asked me.

“I’m afraid no, My Lord..” I answered wearily. I wanted to tell him about the dream, but on the second thought, it would be wiser if I didn’t.

“You said the regular headache potion didn’t work?” he asked again. I just nodded. Lord Raphael let go of my wrist, got up from his chair and walked over to a

cabinet full of bottles and vials. He stood scanning for a moment before taking a transparent vial with a yellowish red liquid inside. He gave it to me. “Try this.” He told me.

I nodded and said thank you.

“One more thing before you go, Lunalea.” Lord Raphael tapped my shoulder lightly; he looked thoughtful. “I need your blood sample. To be tested.”

I raised my eyebrows, obviously curious. “May I know what kind of test, My Lord?”

“No.” he answered shortly and firmly, almost rather harsh, which was quite a shock to me. Lord Raphael noticed this, and he quickly added, “But I will inform you about the result once I’ve done with the test.” Then he smiled assuringly. I was too weak to argue, so I just conformed to his request.

After I was back in my chamber, sitting on my bed, I examined the vial Lord Raphael gave me. A part of me was doubtful, not sure that this potion would work. But another part of me trusted Lord Raphael; He was my saviour after all..

I opened the vial and drank the content in one gulp. The liquid felt cool and tasted bitter, a bit like rust. I coughed. I didn't felt anything yet—my head still pounding—, so I decided to go to sleep at once. I laid down and sighed.

Zeva.

Suddenly that name appeared in my mind. Was it my name before I lost my memory? I never questioned my past before this because I was afraid. Afraid of a part of me I didn't know. But now..I thought perhaps I should find out the truth, perhaps I should face the ghost of my past..

I began to doze. And I fell asleep into yet another strange dream. This dream turned into a nightmare; I was back amongst the burned carcasses, alone and confused. I kneeled down and buried my face onto my hands. It was sticky and smelled putrid. Why was it sticky? I took my hands away from my face and was horrified to find them drenched in blood. I screamed and tried to get up, but I got tripped on something: a human body, covered in blood, lying on the ground, and facing downward. I felt my heart

stop beating when I noticed the fiery red hair…No, No..it couldn't be..

But it could.

I turned the body upward, only to confirm my suspicion. It was Lord Mikael.

'Bang! Bang! Bang!' a fierce knocking on my door woke me. I sat up instantly, and the first thing I noticed was the headache. It's gone! The potion worked! I was elated. But then came the fierce knocking again. Seriously, whoever it was outside must be determined to knock the door down. I rushed to open it before the door really colapsed.

"Yes?"

In front of me stood a maid who looked only a few years older than me, and really aggravated. "Pack your belongings, Lady. You're moving." She said to me crossly. Why was she angry? I didn't even know her..

"What? Where?" I asked her, confused. But then I noticed the crimson band on her maid uniform.

Comprehension dawned. She's a maid from Lord Mikael palace; I was to move there.

***

Sorry this part is short..and no Mikael POV..it's also a bit dark. Just bear with me okay..

Many thanks for your comment and vote [you know who you are ;)] Words cannot describe how grateful I am..And thanks for reading of course!!

Chapter 9

[pt.9] The One Word

Part 9

Do you believe in karma? I do. Because right now I am having a terrible headache..seriously.

***

[Mikael POV]

I swung my blade and beheaded the last demon on the battlefield. It fell with a gush of blood staining my armor. After one day and one night non-stop battle, it's finally over. And I was glad, though I'd been in worse situations.

I looked around the gory aftermath. About three-fourth of my troop survived, including some who were injured. I wasn't pleased with this; they're supposed to be my elite forces. I expected them all survived, but it turned out that the demon army could not be underestimated.

Lady Gabriel walked towards me, holding a crossbow on her left hand. When I arrived at her camp site two days ago, she was already in a state of siege. My troop and I broke through the enemy rank on the north side to reach her. And it was true that she's in the verge of destruction; she brought with her three captains and only one left, five male healers and only two left, about a hundred warriors and less than twenty left. While the opponent was at about two hundreds. She was grateful to see me.

"There's something disturbing about those demons." She remarked, flapping her blood-stained hair in disgust.

"Yeah?" I wasn't interested and started walking towards the camp. Gabriel walked beside me.

“It’s not only about the shapeshifting ability.” She continued, “They fought like they had no fear, not afraid of death.”

“Every soldier should fight like that.” I replied in a sarcastic tone.

Gabriel narrowed her eyes. “And they talked about the rising of a new leader.”

“Nonsense.”

“You think so? You wait and see. We managed to capture an enemy commander, and we’ll make him talk.” Said Gabriel, determined.

By this time I had reached my tent. “Do what you want to do. I’m going back to the palace now.” I pushed aside the canvas and went in. Gabriel followed. I wasn’t surprised.

“No you’re not.” Said Gabriel firmly. I ignored her and fetched a clean cloth to wipe the blood stain on my sword. I barely noticed Gabriel throw her crossbow to the ground with a ‘clank’ and began to take off her armor as well as her clothes underneath it.

I sighed wearily. “Save your time and just leave me alone.” I told her before she was completely naked. I swore that would be the last thing I wanted in the world.

“No.” she was glaring at me, now only clad in her top. “I will have what I want.”

I sheathed my sword and tossed it aside, then I turned to face Gabriel. Without a word, I took off my armor. A satisfied smile spread upon her lips while she stood watching me. Then I ripped open the front of my tunic, revealing the vermillion tattoo on my chest. Gabriel’s eyes widened in shock when she saw it; she recognized the insignia.

“You!” she shouted, obviously furious. “What did you do?!” I kept silent because I thought that’s a stupid question and I didn’t need to answer it. “Who’s the woman?? Who is she!” she demanded.

“Then what? What would you do if I tell you?” I glared at her, daring her.

Gabriel laughed, almost hysterically, “Of course I will kill her! I will kill her so you can be free again!” she exclaimed.

“You can try.” I responded in a deadly cold tone, “But I assure you, I will kill you first.”

Her laugh stopped abruptly when she realized how serious I was. “Don’t tell me you’re in love with her.”

“I am in love with her.” I verified. Gabriel groaned in frustation. She was about to say something when there’s a soldier outside the tent, addressing her.

“What!” she snapped angrily.

“It’s the demon commander, My Lady.” Replied the soldier, sounded anxious due to his Great Captain’s dreadful mood. I almost felt sorry for him. “He’s dead.” He informed her.

“Well, how much did you get from it?!” Gabriel demanded.

“He was..resilient, My Lady.” Came the reply.

“How. Much. Did. You. Get. From. It??!!” Roared Gabriel, with stressing in every word. I was actually amazed that she could be this scary.

I could hear the soldier gulped . “One word, My Lady.” In respond to this, Gabriel was cursing and swearing heatedly. Seeing Gabriel was too engrossed in her own rage, I took the initiative to ask the soldier: “What is that one word?” because I must admit that I was intrigued.

“Zeva.”

***

Okay. Another short part. Sorry… I intended to write longer..but you know..this headache’s bugging me so.. Btw, I’m planning the next part to once again have a making-love scene..what do you think..? I wont add it if you think it’s lousy..so, give comment, okay…lotsa thanks for reading…

Chapter 10

[pt.10] The Reunited

Wotcher! Sorry I didn't upload earlier. Here's a quick recap: Mikael and Gabriel were in a tent after winning a battle against demons, Gabriel was furious knowing Mikael had got married, then a soldier came bringing some tidings for them.

Right. I think it's necessary to warn readers that this part has a sexual content, so..you know the drill. =p

***

Part 10

[Mikael POV]

"Zeva." Said the soldier outside my tent.

Gabriel growled, dissatisfied. “That’s it??” she shouted at the soldier outside; apparently she heard the one word in the midst of her own cursing and swearing. “That’s all you got?! One meaningless word!!”

“Our deepest apology, My Lady..” squeaked the soldier, “But we assume it is the name of the new leader of the demon army.”

I frowned. What the heck. ‘What is, or rather, who is this Zeva?’ I asked myself, ‘human or demon?’ Ridiculous; I never knew demons had names. I just knew they had heads I could cut off. So, if this Zeva was supposed to be the new leader of demon army, I would just have to find and kill him. Perhaps then the human race would finally be victorious.

“Where are you going?” snapped Gabriel when she saw me walking out of the tent. I ignored her. She followed me outside. The soldier quickly moved aside, giving us way.

Once I stood outside the tent, I whistled to call my Red Hare. It wasn’t long before he came galloping towards me. I smiled at the sight of the beautiful

beast; he was huge with a reddish brown skin and charcoal black eyes. He resembled me in many ways; fierce and untamed. Red Hare came into a halt right in front of me and I caressed his mane lovingly.

“You haven’t even had rest yet!” protested Gabriel, realizing that I was seriously leaving.

“I can rest when I’m dead.” I retorted. Then I took the harness, swinging my body smoothly to mount Red Hare. I pressed my heel to the side of his body.

“Mikael!” she stomped on the ground angrily, “I haven’t finished with you!!” she yelled at the top of her lungs, but I had already ridden Red Hare away.

[Lunalea POV]

The maid from Lord Mikael’s palace helped me pack my belongings, grudgingly. Maybe she was irritated to be awaken in the dead of the night, or maybe, most likely, she was irritated because I was to move to Lord Mikael palace. Maybe she was guessing who I was and didn’t like the possibility; maybe she thought I was his concubine or something.

I asked the maid whether or not Lord Mikael had come back from the battlefield and if it's he himself who sent her to fetch me. The maid glared at me but said nothing. So I decided it's best for me to keep my mouth shut.

It didn't take long to pack my things; I only had a few clothes, some potion bottles, some books and a hairbrush. All of them were stuffed into a single canvas bag and the maid 'kindly' carried it for me.

As we were heading to Lord Mikael Palace, I kept wondering why this was so sudden. I wondered if Lord Raphael knew about this; I didn't get the chance to talk to him and I felt bad. Though I must admit that I was also thrilled in anticipation if I was about to meet Lord Mikael. If he had indeed come back from the battlefield, I hoped he didn't get injured. I shuddered when I remembered my dream wherein Lord Mikael lay bleeding. I very much hoped it wasn't a bad omen.

The maid accompanied me until we reached the corridor leading to Lord Mikael's chamber, then she handed me my bag before she gave me one last glare

and left. I sighed and began strolling down the red-carpeted floor. To my left and right were stone walls in which tapestries, paintings of all great generals who once resided this palace—some had died on the battlefield, some had died of illness— and light orbs were hung.

At last I reached the door. I touched the sacred marriage insignia on my chest and gritted my teeth, feeling anxious and elated at the same time. Then I took a deep breath before knocking the door thrice.

“Come in.” came the answer. It was the deep stern voice of Lord Mikael; there’s no doubt about it. I steadied myself, then slowly opened the door. Lord Mikael was standing near a table, his hand holding a goblet. As I stood watching, he emptied the content of the goblet and put it on the table. I held my breath when I noticed he had bloodstains on his clothes, and that his tunic was ripped open right across his chest, exposing the insignia similar to mine. I was glad to see him, but I didn’t like the possibility of him being injured. “Good timing.” He said when he saw me,

“Could you lend me a hand?” he pointed to a stone basin full of water on the table.

I put my canvas bag down and walked towards the table. There’s a clean cloth next to the basin, and I dipped it into the water. “Are you injured somewhere, My Lord?” I asked him carefully as I wiped the dirt and stains on his face. I tried to keep my hand steady, but it’s difficult to do under the intense gaze of those mesmerizing black eyes. My heart was throbbing like crazy.

“I’m feeling okay. Especially now that you’re here.” He mumbled, just when I noticed fresh blood on his upper left arm.

“Excuse me, My Lord..” I reached for his arm and gasped when I saw a deep cut. I mentally blamed myself because I didn’t place a stronger ward to protect him. Now I cautiously wiped the blood around the wound and sealed it with my healing power. “is there any other wound?” I asked him.

Lord Mikael shrugged his shoulders. “I don’t think so.” He answered ignorantly, still gazing at my face

intensely. I averted my eyes, flushing red; why he kept staring at me that way?

I gently reached for his right arm to check for any injuries; I didn't believe he had no more. I found a few sratches and bruises, and healed them easily. The next thing was his torso..and Lord Mikael had deliberately took off his tunic. I found a few bruises there, and healed them too while trying hard not to be intimidated by his well-built figure.

I hesitated when I was about to check his lower regions. Lord Mikael noticed my hesitation and chuckled. "You've seen me naked before, my wife." He teased me. I felt my cheeks redden; to remember the fact that he's my husband… "Here." He pushed down his slacks. I gulped before I kneeled down and began to wipe his legs clean. They appeared to be uninjured.

After a while, Lord Mikael was clean and unscathed. He didn't look at all like a warrior who had just come back from a battle. I turned away, trying not to stare to much at his magnificient naked body.

“I..I will fetch you some clothes, My Lord..” I stuttered, stumbling towards the wardrobe, but Lord Mikael stopped me by gripping my shoulders.

“You know that won’t be necessary..” he hissed, moving both of his hands down to my waist. Yes, I knew..I knew that he wanted me. And I wanted him too..I just couldn’t say it; how could I? That would be..improper.

Lord Mikael turned my body around to face him. I looked up at him sheepishly. In return, he grinned and swiftly lifted my body up high as if I was weightless and brought me back down. I yelped in surprise, unconsciously wrapping my arms around his neck and my legs around his hips to prevent me from falling. But of course I wouldn’t had fallen because Lord Mikael’s grip on me was firm. He smiled at me, seemingly amused by my reaction. I felt so ashamed and tried half-heartedly to disentangle myself from him—of course he wouldn’t allow me.

My pulse quickened when I stared into his blazing eyes. His fire of passion spread onto me, making it

hard to control myself. Before I knew what I was doing, I had already leaned forward and captured his lips in a fervent kiss. He seemed startled yet pleased, and instantly returned the kiss.

I barely noticed Lord Mikael carry me onto his bed; we were still kissing passionately. He then sat himself down, bringing me with him, and leaned back against the headboard. I backed a little, trying to catch my breath, and blushed when I noticed I was straddling him; his hardened shaft was pressed against my thigh. Lord Mikael, still gripping my waist tightly, brought his face down to kiss the base of my neck. His hot breath tickled my sensitive skin. With his right hand Lord Mikael ripped open the front of my gown. I mourned silently, 'Must he ruin every gown I have?'

The thought didn't linger, because Lord Mikael's lips had gone back up to kiss my already swollen lips, seizing all of my attention. Slowly his hand ran over my thighs, simultaneously pushing up the hem of my lower gown. My skin grew warm in places he touched; he made me moan and shiver in pleasure.

“Lunalea..” he whispered upon my trembling lips, “I love you..” down there, I could feel him lining up his column with my moist folds and I instinctively lifted my hips slightly.

“I love you.., Mikael…” I whispered back, bringing my hips back down, thus burying him inside my warmth. Lord Mikael growled in pleasure while I screeched and whimpered, gripping his shoulders tightly. I buried my face on his right shoulder, savoring the pleasant feeling that I felt.

He bucked his hips up impatiently when I didn’t make any movement after awhile. “My Love, you’re in control now..” he spoke slowly yet rather roughly. I looked at him, bewildered. “Just..move.” he told me.

“Ah..” I blushed again before I began to ride him in medium pace, making the pleasure grew. I couldn’t hold back my moaning, and Lord Mikael groaned in agreement. He gripped my waist tighter when I moved faster, ramming my hips against his. He thrusted up in complement. I felt pressure begin to build in my lower regions. “I..I can’t..” I pleaded. His thrusts were becoming erratic, making me

practically bouncing. “My Lord..” I threw my head back and cried loudly when I reached the peak of absolute pleasure, clawing onto his back—fortunately I didn’t have long nails. My head felt like spinning in delight and my breath was heavy.

My clenching him tightly inside finally sent Lord Mikael over the edge. His whole body tensed and he groaned loudly as he exploded within me. “thank you.” He said softly after awhile, after my breath regained its normal pace.

I stared at Lord Mikael, surprised to see a loving smile across his lips. “You’re not upset?” I whispered cautiously, “Because of my…inexperience..?”

Lord Mikael stared back at me and laughed merrily. He sure had a nice laugh, if only he could always smile and laugh like this.. “What are you saying, silly?” he gently pushed aside the stray strands of hair on my forehead. “I’m blessed to have you..” with that he laid back onto the bed, pulling me with him.

I rested my head on his chest. “It is I who’s blessed, My Lord..” I said slowly.

“Then we both are blessed.” He concluded, caressing my hair gently. Then he yawned. “I need some sleep..will you be at my side, Lunalea?”

I lifted my head slightly to look at him. “Of course, My Lord. Where else will I be?” I smiled reassuringly.

“Good.” Lord Mikael closed his eyes and drifted off to sleep. My heart was filled with love and happiness when I looked at his sleeping face. I couldn’t help smiling. He looked so peaceful and innocent; who would have believe that this man had taken thousands of lives when he looked like this?

For a few blissful moments, I laid listening to the sound of Lord Mikael’s steady heartbeat, enjoying the warmth of his embrace. His steady heartbeat and warmth slowly lulled me to sleep. For those few moments, I felt like nothing could ever go wrong.

Did I fall asleep?

Why was everything pitch black? Was this the dream? The blindness?? I thought frantically.

Then something snapped. And I was utterly confused when I realized I was standing in the kitchen. In

front of me was a tray full of food; some bread, some cheese, a bowl of soup, and a jar of fresh milk. Was this a dream—part of the dream? But the smell of the food was so mouth-watering..so real..

“Do you need anything else, Lady?” asked someone behind me. I turned around to find myself face to face with the chief cook of the castle, a 45 years old woman with a pleasant and friendly expression.

“Uh..” so this was not a dream. But I didn’t remember coming to kitchen! “No, thank you.” I said, smiling, trying to conceal my confusion.

“Alright then.” The cook smiled back, “You better bring it to Lord Mikael immediately, before the soup become cold.”

“Ah..yes.” that’s all I could manage to say. The cook turned around and occupied herself with another kitchen work. I turned back to the tray and was going to lift it with both hands when I noticed I was holding something on my right hand. I opened my palm and found an empty tiny vial. Curious, I brought the vial under my nose and took a whiff. I was so shocked when I recognized that the vial bore

the scent of a deadly poison. How on earth this thing came into my possession? And what did I do with the poison??

I stared at the bowl of soup with utter horror.

***

Alright..I think the plot begins to fit the title ^^;

Review and comment, please…I'd really appreciate it. Many thanks for everyone who reads this story; especially for xXAngelFiresXx, readinggirl136, rtql8_en, Erica5735, and ladyoflitany. Your comments keep me going..Thank you very much XD…

Chapter 11

[pt.11] The Horrible Joke

Part 11

[Mikael POV]

The morning came, bringing sunlight into my chamber and forcing my eyes to open. I sat up and strained my arms' muscles. I felt incredibly good. Then I realized that Lunalea was no longer at my side. I scanned the chamber but found no sight of her. Where's she, I wondered..

I got out of the bed and found that some clothes had been prepared on the table, along with a basin full of water and a clean cloth. I cleaned myself as best as I could, but I thought I was doing a lousy job. As I was

getting dressed, Lunalea entered the room. She brought breakfast on a tray. I was relieved to see her.

“Good morning, My Lord.” She greeted me, giving one of her lovely smiles. She looked as gorgeous as always, wearing a white dress with blue stripes—the uniform of a healer—and a dark blue shawl that matched the color of her eyes. Her long black hair was braided loosely. “Did you sleep well, My Lord?” Lunalea asked me as she put the tray down on the table.

“Yes, thanks to you..” I remarked affectionately. She smiled shyly. ‘I’ll never get tired of that smile’ I thought to myself.

Then Lunalea walked up to me and murmured, “excuse me, My Lord.” before she straightened up my neckline. I bent down and kissed her rosy cheek. I semiled when her eyes widened and her cheek blushed pink; she’s very adorable.

“What do you bring for breakfast?” I asked her, though I could see some bread and cheese on the tray. I had already sat down when she answered: “uhm..there’s some bread, cheese, and corn soup…

the cook told me you like corn soup..” there’s a hint of anxiety in her voice. I noticed a bowl full of creamy yellow liquid; it smelled nice. I picked up a spoon placed next to it and scooped the soup. Lunalea looked at me in anticipation when I ate the soup.

“Hm..the cook’s soup doesn’t usually taste like this..” I commented. Lunalea went a bit pale.

“Forgive me, My Lord…” she said quietly, “the cook didn’t make that…I did.”

My eyes widened in surprise. “You made this!” I exclaimed. Now she looked a bit panic; I bet she misinterpreted my reaction.

“If you don’t like it, I—“

“No!” I cut short, “I like it!” I ate another spoonfull, “This is delicious.” She looked relief upon hearing this. I smiled. “I should have married you sooner.” I said. And once again she blushed.

“I’m glad you find it to your liking, My Lord..”

“Sit here and eat with me.” I said, pulling her wrist down. She obeyed. We ate breakfast in silence. I

found myself unable to stop staring at her, and she would glance up at me now and then, looked a bit shy and was not sure what to talk or to do. This was a new experience for me, and for her too, judging from her behaviors.

After the breakfast, I told Lunalea that I would see Raphael and told him about us. She looked a bit tensed. “Should I go with you?” she offered.

“No need. Our marriage and your moving here are my decisions. I will explain it to Raphael. And if he disagree..well, there’s nothing he can do about it anyway.” I said, wicked grin on my face. Lunalea looked alarmed. “Don’t worry, my love..” I took her chin and lifted it up, “I promise I’ll try my best to avoid any clash with your chief.” Then I bent down to press my lips against hers.

[Lunalea POV]

While Lord Mikael went to see Lord Raphael in his working chamber, I headed for the infirmary. I couldn’t stop thinking about this morning’s incident. I was absolutely terrified when I found out about the poisoned soup, terrified of the possibility that I was

the one who put the poison in it. Did I just try to poison my own husband? Why would I do that? I discarded the soup at once, but seeing the cook had already been busy preparing the breakfast for the dining hall, I made the new one myself—fortunately Lord Mikael liked the soup I made. But still..the fact that I had lost time and had a vial of deadly posion in my hand without knowing it really troubled me.

I barely noticed someone staring at me from behind a stone pillar to my right, and I jerked in surprise when that someone suddenly stepped in front of me. I looked up and immediately made a bow when I realized who's standing before me. "My Lady." I addressed her politely.

It was indeed Lady Gabriel, the most respectable female warrior, one of the four great generals. She was feared and loved by men and women alike. I remembered Lord Mikael said he had gone to the battlefield to aid her. It meant she's just got back from a tough battle. Now she stood before me, both hands on her hips, scrutinizing me from head to toe. It went without saying she made me uneasy.

“Mmm..do you need anything, My Lady?” I asked her nervously. I got the idea that she was mad at me, though I didn’t know why.

“Yes.” She answered. Her voice was as cold as ice. “I need to talk to you. Come with me.” She turned around and started walking. I had no choice but to comply, wondering about what she could possibly need to talk about with me. Perhaps I did an awful job treating the wounds of her troop and she wanted to complain. I never tended her injuries though, she always ask for a male healer.

I followed Lady Gabriel to the inner garden, located in the center of the castle. It had various trees and flowers,and a pond with a bridge over it, making up a beautiful scenery—to bad I couldn’t enjoy it right now because I was too anxious.

Lady Gabriel walked onto the bridge and stopped in the middle of it. I stopped just a few steps behind her. She looked down at the reflection of herself on the water surface and suddenly asked, “What do you think about me? Am I beautiful?”

“Yes, you are, My Lady.” I answered. And I did think she’s beautiful, with golden locks that was glowing in the sunlight and stunning light brown eyes. I just didn’t understand where this would lead.

“Do you think I can make any man fall in love with me?” she asked me again.

“Certainly, My Lady.”

Lady Gabriel turned and stood in front of me, glaring daggers. “Then why,” she snarled, “did Mikael choose you over me?!” with one swift movement she grabbed the front of my dress and ripped it open. I yelped in surprise, automatically covering my bare chest with both hands. I looked at Lady Gabriel, horrified; she was staring at the vermillion insignia on my chest in such hatred, as if staring at it would make it disappear.

“You witch!” she yelled at me, “What charm do you use on him??”

I shook my head weakly. I got it now; why she’s angry at me..but the question of why Lord Mikael chose

me..I truly didn't have the answer. In fact I'd been asking myself the same thing.

"Answer me." Lady Gabriel lifted her right hand and grabbed my neck. I coughed, one hand flew to grab her wrist, my eyes brimming with tears. "P-pl-please.." I tried to speak. I was utterly aware that she could end my life right here and right now; I was at her mercy. She just stood glaring at me, seemingly enjoying my agony. It's getting harder to breathe; my lungs seemed to be burned. And then she abruptly released me. I fell to my knees and gasped for air.

"I hate you." I heard Lady Gabriel stated bitterly, "I want to kill you. But that will only make Mikael furious."

I looked up and wanted to say something, anything… but I couldn't seem to find any suitable words for this kind of situation. So I just whispered, "Forgive me.." 'forgive me for taking someone you love..' that's what I actually wanted to say.

"Don't apologize!" She snapped, "You make me feel worse!" then she grabbed me once again, on the wrist and heaved me to my feet. I hadn't even had

the chance to say something when Lady Gabriel turned around and strode away, practically dragging me behind her. I stumbled to follow her pace.

“Where—“ I tried to ask, perplexed by her action.

“Shut up!” she barked. And I didn’t say anything else. I noticed she took me to the northern side of the castle, the part I’d never been to before. It was deserted; hardly anyone came here, though it was supposed to be Lord Uriel’s palace. Did she took me to see him?

Apparently not. As soon as we passed through the gate—there’s no guard standing there, Lady Gabriel pulled me to the nearest wooden door. She yanked the door open and shoved me inside. It was completely dark and I realized it was an old cupboard.

‘Bam!’ she slammed the door closed.

“My Lady!” I exclaimed in panic and tried to pushed open the door. It didn’t budge. She locked me inside! I began to pound on the door frantically. “My Lady, please let me out!”

I could hear Lady Gabriel laughed. “You can scream until you run out of voice. No one will come!” she mocked me.

“Why are you doing this to me..?” I pleaded. The answer I got was the sound of Lady Gabriel’s boots on the stone floor, stomping away. I tried to push the door again, with all my might, but still it wouldn’t open. I sighed and slumped down, leaning against the cold wall. I rested my chin on my knees. I couldn’t see anything, it was too dark, just like in my dream… The thick dust on the air made me cough. I sharpened my hearing; if I heard anyone’s footsteps nearby, I would scream for help.

But minutes passed and I heard nothing except the howling of the cold wind. I felt like I was going to cry. Lord Mikael…please find me…

***

Hi, I hope you like this part. Do you hate Lady Gabriel now? ^^; In the next part I will introduce Lord Uriel to you. Meanwhile..please review and comment, okay..thanks!! and thanks for reading!! >.<

Chapter 12

[pt.12] The Foretelling

Part 12

[Mikael POV]

I stepped inside Raphael's working chamber. A strange iron-like smell hung thick in the air; I ignored it. The chief healer was sitting with his back facing me, apparently was examining something. I cleared my throat. "Raphael." I addressed him, "I need to talk."

"I know." He replied, still looking at whatever it was on his table.

I raised on eyebrow. "You know?"

"It's Lunalea, right? You moved her from my palace." Raphael finally turned around to face me. His expression was stern and I could tell at once that he was displeased with my action.

"Yes. About that. She and I-"

"Married." He cut short. His sharp gaze of his clear blue eyes seemed to pierce through my skull.

I wasn't surprised that he knew already. "She told you." I concluded.

"No." Raphael shook his head. "I just need to look at her aura to know that she's been tainted."

Now I was incensed. "You call it 'tainted'??" I narrowed my eyes dangerously.

"What else should I call it?" he said cooly.

"Look, I understand you're upset that I take her from you. But you're not her father, Raphael!" I heard myself raising the tone of my voice. Oh, no..I had to calm down. I promised Lunalea.. But..a thought popped in my head, a thought that triggered my

jealousy. "Or..does she mean something else to you...?" I hissed.

Silence reigned for a few seconds. I clenched my fists, tensing, when Raphael opened his mouth and said: "I may not be her father..or her lover, if that's what you are suggesting, but I'm the one who found her. I'm the one who even gave her that name, Lunalea. And you..what do you know about her?" his voice was serene, matter-of-factly.

I became quiet. He's right; what did I know about her? Except her existence. To think of it, I might have heard rumors about her amongst the soldiers. That Raphael miraculously found her somewhere on the northern border, on the aftermath of a battle against the demons.. she was a sole survivor, perhaps she's an unfortunate civilian caught up in a very unfortunate situation. The only fortunate thing was that she had a healing ability. I also heard that she lost her memory because of the trauma. But then again..I didn't care about her past! What mattered to me were the present and the future. I loved her; she's my wife now. And I wanted to forge a future where

we both could live together peacefully, without war, without demons.

Seeing me preoccupied in my own thoughts, Raphael got up and placed his hand gently on my shoulder, bringing me back to reality. "Mikael, I don't object your marrying her." He said, "I just want you to be aware of what you are doing. While her past is still...enigmatic, she's my responsibility."

I glared at him-I was tall, but he was a bit taller than me and it pissed me off. I brushed his hand harshly off my shoulder. "She's my responsibility now, not yours. And you better stay away from my wife." I warned him, putting a stress on the last two words. Then I turned around and walked away before he had the chance to say anything.

[Lunalea POV]

Dark. Again, with the darkness.. and flashes of red. I couldn't move, I just..perceived everything around me with my senses; heard the screaming, the howling, the war cries, the choking sound, the clashing between metals; smelled the horrid iron-like

smell of blood, the putrid smell of corpses, the smoke.. I wished I was dead already.

I felt a cold grip on my arm, a ragged hot breath which smelled foul closing in. A coarse voice whispered in my ear coldly and painfully: "..avenge..our deaths..." before everything went silent. Silence. For how long I didn't know.. Until there's this speck of light. Small and distant at first, then it got closer..and closer...

I woke up.

My vision was a bit blur. I tried to focus and was able to make out that I was in a small circular room with one large open window facing the blue sky obscured by gloomy grey clouds, and I was tied to a chair! Panic hit me as I tried to wriggled myself free, but no use; the rope was too tight it actually hurted my arms just above the elbows. I sighed in frustration.

"You're awake." A cold dreamlike voice greeted me.

I looked around, startled to realize I wasn't the only one in the room. Someone tall and slim, with dark purple robe stepped in front of me, blocking my view

to the outside world. His long black hair was like a dark veil concealed part of his face, and I could see an amethyst eye peering through strands of hair-an eye right in the middle of his forehead! I was too shocked to say anything.

"Hmm.." the dreamlike voice hummed as the amethyst eye observed my face throroughly. Now I noticed his two normal eyes were dead grey; was he blind? No, I was sure he could see well enough, only not in the way most humans see. I held my breath. Who was this man, and what did he intend to do with me? I couldn't take a guess; I didn't dare. "I see...dark blue instead of crimson red." He murmured and flicked his fingers-his long bony fingers with unnaturally pale skin. To my surprise, the rope around me loosened instantly and fell to the floor. I looked down and quickly tightened the shawl around my shoulders to cover the front of my dress that was torn.

The man then glided across the room (yes, he didn't seem to touch the ground) and I turned my head around to follow him. The room appeared to be some

kind of office; with one bookshelf, one cabinet, one desk and another chair. The mysterious man sat on the chair behind the desk.

I snapped myself out of my petrified state and managed to ask weakly, "Excuse me, but who are you and where am I..?"

"My name is Uriel and this is my chamber." He answered calmly while I, once again, was shocked.

I jumped from the chair and hastily made a bow. "My Lord! Please forgive me..!" How should I know this man was one of the great generals! He didn't look like a warrior at all; did he ever went to the battlefield himself?

"Pray sit down." Lord Uriel waved his left hand, making the chair turned around on its own. I sat down waryly, noticing that he was an advanced magic user-he didn't even need a spell. "It is I who should apologize to you." Said Lord Uriel, "I had to knock you unconscious and..disarm you." He gestured towards a knife on the desk. I could distinguish it as a bread knife.

I gasped; Oh no, what did I do..did I lost my time again? I remembered I was locked in an old cupboard by Lady Gabriel..then what happened? How did I manage to get out? How did I end up in Lord Uriel's chamber? Was it me who bring the knife? Why..and what did I do with it?? There're so many questions in my head; who could give me the answers? I was terribly frustrated.

"My Lord, could you tell me..how I came here in the first place..? and the knife...did I bring it here..?" great. I couldn't even pose a sensible question.

Lord Uriel rested his elbows on the desk and slowly wove his fingers. "I foresaw your coming here." He said in a mysterious tone. "Therefore I foresaw your failure in killing me today."

I tried to kill him??! I stared at him in shock, my hand flew to my open mouth. Somehow, a small part of me had already known, but his confirmation still came as a big hit to me. First Lord Mikael, now Lord Uriel-what was wrong with me??

"Worry not about the past." Said Lord Uriel cooly. "You should be worried about the future. I foresaw your being a threat to this kingdom."

"I..am a threat?" I croaked; my throat felt so dry and my head began to spin. "But how...? I'm just a mere healer..."

"Are you sure about that?" asked Lord Uriel nonchalantly. I didn't answer. 'No, I'm not sure. I know nothing about my past..and I need to know. I need a way to regain my memory..'

"I need to find out about my past.." I spoke out my mind. I felt coldness running down my spine, making me shiver, and there's a cold stone weighing down my stomach. I was afraid, very much, but I knew I couldn't move on if my past still haunting me.

"I am not the one to see into the past." Lord Uriel stated. "Yet I can tell you one more thing.." I looked at him waryly, preparing myself for the worst. He looked back at me, his amethyst eye creeping me out. "You may find the answers you seek in the underworld." He said slowly. To me, his voice was

like coming from another world. I wasn't even sure he was talking to me.

My head was spinning faster. Again I was at a lost for words. The underworld? The world of the demons? How could I possibly go there without being ripped apart by its inhabitants?

"The time will come." Lord Uriel pulled me out of my own thoughts. "For now I suggest you leave, and greet your husband down the stairs before he come up here and tear down my chamber with his burning rage."

***

Is this a revelation? Or more confusion? Aww..I'm sorry if I confuse you..please don't hex me =p ..review, comment and vote are welcome though..^^; Lotsa thanks for putting up with me this far..please keep reading..! xoxo

Chapter 13

[pt.13] The Findings

Part 13

[Mikael POV]

After my ‘small’ talk with Raphael, I was really aggravated and I felt the need to see Lunalea. She’s the one who could soothe my anger, the one who could calm me, so I went straight to the infirmary. To my dismay, she wasn’t there. I headed to my chamber; perhaps she didn’t feel well and wanted to rest for today—I remembered her pale face this morning. But she wasn’t in my chamber either.

I stood and pondered for a moment. Could she possibly be back to her chamber in Raphael’s palace?

I didn't like the idea, but yes, it's possible. It's possible that she had left something behind when she was rushed to move to my palace last night. Without delay I went to Lunalea's chamber, only to be disappointed once more—it's empty. Where the hell was she?? My patience was running low.

I went back to the infirmary and began to interrogate everyone there. No one seemed to know my wife's whereabouts. Should I dispatch a search party??

Feeling mentally tired, I sat down on a chair in Lunalea's working chamber and pressed my left palm against my temple. I could actually ask Raphael for help—that guy knew about magic and was surely able to do a tracking spell, but I genuinely disliked that idea. I wouldn't give him the satisfaction of 'I told you so' or some sort. I had already told him that Lunalea was my responsibility.

The other person who knew about magic was someone that almost everyone avoided: Lord Uriel. Yes, even I addressed him with 'Lord'. He's already a great general when I first came to this castle, and even a long way back before that. They said he never

aged. On a very few occasions I met him, I believed I could confirm that. He looked like a twenty-year-old man with a creepy and mysterious aura. Even if I asked for his assistance, I wasn't sure he would deliberately lend his hand. But I had to try nevertheless.

Minutes later, I found myself walking towards Lord Uriel's palace in the northern side of the castle. The palace was actually deserted; he didn't have any maid, he didn't even have any soldier. Human soldier, I meant. When going into a battle, which was also in a very rare occasion, Lord Uriel would summoned an undead army. This army would sweep clean anyone in their way, enemies and allies alike—that's why he hardly ever go into a battle. Lord Uriel's underlings were like a double-edged sword, it would hurt its master when not wisely used. I had witnessed this army just once, from afar, and they were indeed very terrifying.

Lord Uriel resided in a chamber at the top of the highest tower, which could only be accessed through his palace. As I walked through the unguarded gate, I

noticed the ruins of a wooden door to my right; I didn't even bother to wonder why and how. My aim was the spiral staircase leading to the top of the tower.

I walked up the stairs briskly, thinking about ways to make Lord Uriel couldn't decline my request. I almost bumped into someone who's decending the stairs. A slender hand pressed against my left shoulder, a familiar sweet and calm voice saying "My Lord.."

"Lunalea!" I beamed, feeling glad and surprised at the same time. Instinctively, I pulled her delicate body into my arms. I pressed my face against the top of her head, basking in her sweet scent.

"My Lord…I..I can't breathe.." she whimpered after a few moments.

"Oh..sorry." I released her. Still gripping her upper arms, I took a good look at my wife. I was right; she was pale sick. I was about to ask her was she was doing in this place when I noticed the front of her dress that was ripped. In an instant I was furious again. "Did Lord Uriel do this to you?!" I roared. I

didn’t care he had an undead army; if he dared laying a finger upon my wife, it’s his funeral!

“No!”cried Lunalea, pleading, her eyes widened due to the shock of seeing me angry. “Lord Uriel has nothing to do with this. In fact.., he helped me.. yes! I got locked in a cupboard, and he helped me to get out..” she explained desperately. Ah, I thought, the busted door.. I trusted Lunalea, but I got a feeling she’s hiding something from me.

“You got locked.” I repeated, thoughtful. She nodded, looking worried. “By who?” I inquired.

Lunalea shook her head weakly. “Please, My Lord..I can’t tell you…” she spoke slowly, almost under her breath.

I cupped her face and forced a smile. “come on, my love..just tell me who.” I coaxed her.

She bit her lower lip and shook her head once more. I sighed; why was she so stubborn? Was she afraid? Was she threatened? “Was it the same person who ripped your dress?” I changed the question. Lunalea looked hesitant and I thought she wouldn’t answer

that too, but then she nodded. “And it’s not Lord Uriel?” I asked again, just to make sure.

“No.” she answered firmly, putting her hands on top of mine. She looked at me straight in the eye so I could tell that she’s telling the truth.

“Very well.” I said. I kissed her on the forehead, then swiftly lifted up her body.

“My Lord, you can put me down..I can walk..” whispered Lunalea when she realized I intended to carry her all the way back to my chamber.

“I know you can.” I grinned, “I just don’t want you to.”

[Lunalea POV]

I was tired, yet I didn’t want to go to sleep. I couldn’t risk having another black out. What if I would once again attempt to kill Lord Mikael? What if I succeeded? No..I wouldn’t take that risk.

I sighed and turned my head to look at Lord Mikael who was sleeping next to me. I gently brushed aside a few of stray strands on his forehead. He was stern

on the outside, a mighty warrior, but inside..he's a boy who craved for love. I realized that from the way he held me possessively this afternoon.

Yes, I knew his story..the maids and female healers talked about it all the time. That Lord Mikael's family was slain by the demons, that he fled to the castle and became a warrior, that he practiced day and night, honing his skills, that he worked hard to be what he was now. All those times..everyone looked at him with respect, with fear…but was there anyone who looked at him with love..?

I knew I wasn't one to talk about love. As far as I remembered (which was from the point Lord Raphael found me), I didn't know what it was to love, and to be loved. Then I met Lord Mikael. Then I saw him smile, saw him laugh..and my world just seemed to be brighter. If to love meant to be willing to do anything for the sake of someone's happiness, then I would positively say that I loved Lord Mikael.

I leaned forward and lightly kissed his cheek. He was fast asleep he didn't even stir, but I swore I could see the corners of his lips curved into a smile. I smiled to

myself, I hoped he was having a wonderful dream.. Then I carefully got out of bed and picked up my night gown from the floor. I got dressed, wrapped a shawl around my shoulders, took a bottle of tonic from my canvas bag and went outside.

Tonight's moon was beautiful. A full moon. After wandering around the palace, I found a nice spot on the second floor; a balcony facing the inner garden. It had two chairs and one table. I sat down on one of the chairs, and was now staring at the beauty of the moon in awe.

The tonic I drank effectively cured my physical fatigue, but did nothing on the mental one. As I sat there in silence, I recalled today's events. The first time I had a black-out, I found a vial of poison in my hand, figured out that I was (probably) trying to end Lord Mikael's life—I shuddered at the thought. Then Lady Gabriel confronted me. Apart from being mad at me, I could tell she's hurted and she hid it beneath all the yelling and screaming. 'I hurt someone..' I thought bitterly, 'I'm a healer—I'm supposed to heal,

not to hurt..' Then I had black-out again, this time trying to kill Lord Uriel.

And the most worrisome thing…was Lord Uriel's prophecy (if I might call it that). He said I'd be a threat to the kingdom..and that I'd find the truth about my past in the underworld..I didn't know what to think of that.

I sighed, and was just in time to notice a speck of azure on the dark velvet sky. Curious; it looked like a butterfly, and it flew this way. 'What a lovely little creature.' I thought to myself as the blue butterfly hovering right in front of my nose, its tiny wings fluttering excitedly. Carefully, I lifted my hand and opened my palm. The butterfly landed smoothly—but to my surprise, as soon as it touched my palm, it transformed into a piece of blue-colored paper.

I smoothed the paper to find an elegant hand-writing on it. It was Lord Raphael's. And it said:

Lunalea, I've done the test on your blood. I need to talk to you. Meet me tomorrow at my working chamber. —Raphael—

***

Hello again! ^^ I know the plot doesn't really progress in this part, but I think I need to highlight a few parts..^^; Thank you so much for your reviews, comments and votes, and thanks for reading!! XD

Btw before I go I want to share a bit information.. If you like romance, then you should check out 'Cold Destiny With Love' by xXAngelFiresXx; it's a love story between a werewolf and a vampire. I know, rare pairing, right? That's why it's so good, make sure you check it out okay...^^

Chapter 14

[pt.14] The Retaliation and The Revelation

I spent a lot of time thinking how I should write this part..now here it is..and I hope you can enjoy it..

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Part 14

[Mikael POV]

I was willing to drop the topic for the sake of Lunalea. But it didn't mean I could just let it go; if you thought I would do nothing after my wife being treated—humiliated— like that, you're wrong. I would find out who did that to her, although I already had a good guess.

The next morning after the incident, I went to the training ground and tried to dig some information from young warriors (mostly archers) who served under Gabriel's command. Yes, I was pretty sure that woman was the culprit. They told me that their chief seemed somehow satisfied when she joined them for some practice the previous day. I asked them if anything good happened to her. They didn't know, but one archer did actually see her in the inner garden with a woman dressed like a healer and he found it quite odd because his chief usually use a male healer's service. Hah. That's it.

I headed to Gabriel's palace in the west side of the castle straight away and barged into her chamber, only to find that she was having a massage. I stood with arms folded as she lazily dismissed her two brawny masseurs and got up from her bed, seemingly had no intention to cover her bare chest. 'God, has this woman no shame?!' I thought.

"Put on you robe." I commanded her with stern voice. She glared at me, defiant look on her eyes. I

glared back, my eyes conveying the message that I seriously didn't like to be disobeyed.

Gabriel snorted in defeat and grabbed her robe. "To what do I owe you this pleasant visit?" she asked me sarcastically as she put on her robe.

"You know I'm capable of killing you right here and right now." I growled, ignoring her.

"Come now, don't be so harsh." She walked up to me with a smug grin across her face that I hated so much. "Why are you so tense, Mika?" Gabriel lifted her hand to stroke my upper arm, but I grabbed her wrist before she touched me.

"I am warning you, woman." I threatened her, "Stay away from my beloved."

Gabriel looked angry, but she couldn't have been angrier than me. "So you've find her already." She said flatly, trying to conceal her emotion in a useless attempt. "I didn't expect it to be so soon. I thought I'd hid her well." And I didn't expect her to admit her misdemeanor right away but she did; I guessed she

really had the moral of a warrior after all. Still, she had an acute problem with her attitude.

“I don’t think you understand how serious I am.” My grip tightened, making her flinch a little.

“You can’t be seriously loving her.” She stated. I just raised my eyebrow, suggesting ‘what do you think?’ and she exploded. “Why her! God, Mika, why you chose her, some random girl out of nowhere?!” she shouted heatedly, “When all of this time you never ever look at me! Not once! What makes her so special?!” her face was red with anger and..what? jealousy?

I never thought of this before, but why was she so keen on seducing me? If the reason was the having-a-powerful-child thing, why didn’t she choose Raphael instead? (I knew I was stronger than him, but that didn’t mean he’s not strong enough) It never occurred to me that she might have a feeling of affection for me. And I sneered at that ridiculous idea. From what I perceived, Gabriel considered men as things—she either had it or didn’t have it, and she

usually got what she wanted. Thus, she's angry because she couldn't have me. That's it, wasn't it..?

"Get over yourself." I hissed, and abruptly let go of her wrist.

"You haven't answered me!" she demanded. Then she laughed peculiarly, throwing her head back. I frowned, 'she's insane.' I thought. When she stared at me again, her eyes showed a glint of arrogancy. "So I am right. You're not seriously loving her. It's just infatuation."

'Hmm..I'm right, she's insane.' I glanced at a basin of water on the table. I approached it, gesturing Gabriel to follow me. "Listen, Gabriel." I looked at her straight in the eyes. "I love my wife beyond reason. And you.." I reached the back of her head, surprisingly gently, and brought her closer to me. "You need to cool your head." Then I slammed her head on the water basin, making the water spilled onto the table and the floor. Gabriel yelled in shock, certainly didn't see it coming.

I took a few steps back as she coughed and sneezed, soaking wet. I almost laughed at this sight. "YOU!!"

she roared, looking fiercely at me. She gritted her teeth, obviously thinking of something for payback.

I maintained a calm and stern expression. “I will tell you once again and hope it will get through the thick skull of yours: Stay away from my wife.” I said in menacing tone. Gabriel didn’t say anything. I turned around and walked away, and halted in the doorway when she suddenly shouted:

“I love you, Mikael! Don’t you understand??” her voice was thick in frustration.

I didn’t even look at her when I replied: “Those words are meaningless coming from your mouth.” And I shut the door after me.

[Lunalea POV]

After Lord Mikael left for the training ground, I went to Lord Raphael working chamber. I felt uneasy and had a bad feeling about this. ‘What does he want to talk about?’ I kept asking that question ever since I received his butterfly message. It obviously had something to do with my blood test. Perhaps I was sick..suffered from an unknown illness.

Tightening the shawl around my shoulder, I walked faster. The autumn wind was getting colder and I didn't like the coldness that bit my skin; it somehow reminded me of the night I was found.

I knocked on Lord Raphael's door softly, hesitantly, but he must have heard it anyway because he answered at once. "Yes." And the door was opened from the inside, showing the tall and slim figure of my chief; he looked dark today, not all shiny as usual. I was startled and a bit flattered that he opened the door for me, but seeing his grim expression making me feel more uneasy. "come in and sit down." He said. And I did as I was told.

Lord Raphael closed the door behind him and sat on a chair opposite me. Before I could say anything, he went first, "I will not prolong your anxiety, Lunalea. But first, I must ask you to forgive me because I didn't tell you earlier." I just nodded, bracing myself. Lord Raphael rested his hands on his lap and looked at me in the eyes.

“You have demon blood in you.” He told me in a flat emotionless tone, supposedly to lessen the impact of the shock.

I blinked once. Twice. Did I hear him right? Yes, I did. His voice was as clear as day. Oh my God..how could this be..? I clutched my chest and tried to calm the raging storm in my head. “I..am..a demon..?” I whispered faintly. Shock and confusion somehow brought tears into my eyes. I couldn’t believe this! But then..it would probably explain the black-outs..the killing attempts…

“Lunalea..” said Lord Raphael softly, trying to calm me. ”You are not a demon. At least…not the entire you.”

“What do you mean, My Lord…?” even if in a state of shock I maintained my polite speech, I must admit I amazed myself.

“You inherit the demon blood from one of your parents, not both.” He answered.

“You’re saying..one of my parents is a demon.” I rephrased his statement. Thinking that either my

mother or my father was a demon made me sick. Thinking that I was a half-demon made me sick. Thinking that I was from the same kind with the ones who slain my husband's family…it's just terrible. No, the worst. I stared down at my both hands, feeling my tears trickled down my cheeks, and asked, "..why don't I look like a demon..with grey skin…red eyes..?" I recalled the image of a demon I once saw—fortunately a dead one—and shuddered in revulsion.

"Because you are only half-demon." He emphasized the word 'half' as if it could make me feel a little bit better. "And the demon blood has been dormant until recently."

Until recently.. Wait a minute. I looked up at Lord Raphael's face—he was looking at me with pained expression. "My Lord, how long..have you known that I am..half demon..?" I asked him waryly.

"Since the day I brought you here. I tested your blood that day." he answered calmly. And I gawped; that long!! Then why did he keep me? Why didn't he end my life as soon as he knew that? Why..oh why he's

been so nice to me all this time?? ‘I am an enemy!’ my head screamed. A threat; Lord Uriel was right!

As if he could read my mind, Lord Raphael said, “You are not an enemy, if that’s what you think. As far as I know, you never done anything wrong. You have even saved many of our warriors. And I’ve told you..the demon blood has been dormant..”

“Until recently.” I continued gravely. “My Lord, it means..now the demon blood is active..isn’t it..?” I asked him, thinking that it didn’t matter how many lives I had saved if I could just take the same amount of lives after the demon in me took control. I was a threat to this kingdom, now there’s no doubt about it.

“Not entirely active.” Answered Lord Raphael. “You sit here listening to me is the proof to that. But I’m afraid..it’s only a matter of time..” he looked thoughtful, his blue eyes clouded.

I sighed heavily, knowing that there might be only one solution to this..and it didn’t involve my being kept alive. But deep in my heart, I didn’t want to give up hope..“What should I do, My Lord? Is there any

potion, any way to supress the activation of this demon blood..?”

The chief healer looked apologetic, “Forgive me, Lunalea..but I cannot think of any way or any potion.” He said regretfully, “ Perhaps if there’s enough time, I can look for something. Anything. Perhaps if I know more about your past…”

“My past..” I mumbled suddenly, recalling the event at the north tower the other day. “’you may find the answers you seek in the underworld..’” unconsciously I reiterated Lord Uriel’s prophecy.

“What’s that?” asked Lord Raphael curiously.

I shook my head weakly. “My Lord..do you think I still have time..?” He raised his eyebrows in a questioning way; we both know it’s rhetorical. I fiddled the hem of my shawl anxiously and said, “I want to know about my past..But I’m afraid I may need your assistance, My Lord..There’s some place I need to go to..”

[Mikael POV]

Jealousy was like a fire that spread quickly and burned your very being. It heated the blood, it blinded the eyes, it numbed the brain. It could bring disaster when it's not controlled by logic.

I drew a sharp breath when I saw my wife standing outside the door of Raphael's working chamber. The man was standing in front of her, leaning towards her and spoke very softly no one but her could hear. They didn't realize my presence; I was quite hidden behind a column. They seemed very serious and grave, and I couldn't help wondering what they were talking about. While I was standing there, slowly fuming inside, a tiny voice inside my head teased me by saying: 'Look how well-matched those two are. If only you didn't get in their way, they'd have made a perfect couple.'

'Shut up!' I snapped myself. My eyes narrowed dangerously when Raphael placed his hand on Lunalea's shoulder and stroke it gently. There's this urge to rush towards them and to strangle Raphael's neck. Yet I tried to ignore it and gritted my teeth. Funny, I never thought I would ever feel jealous.

***

Alright..did you see it coming? He he he ^^; please comment and review..pretty please..I'm feeling like I'm missing something but I don't know what..T.T

Thank you so much for reading..!! and to my awsome fans..many many thanks! I promise I'll read all of your works and give reviews whenever necessary..>.<

Chapter 15

[pt.15] The Unspoken and The Departure

‘Please forgive me for everything I left unsaid..I’d like to rectify that if I could..And if I had the chance to make you believe, for you I would erase the dark side in me..’ ~Andra and the Backbone~

Quick recap: Raphael revealed the fact that Lunalea’s a half-demon and that the demon blood in her was getting active. Mikael saw them talking and somehow felt jealous.

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Part 15

[Lunalea POV]

“Underworld?” Lord Raphael frowned. “You need to go to the underworld?” He looked at me attentively, as if trying to figure out how in the world I could come up with such a crazy idea. I didn’t tell him about Lord Uriel’s prophecy because I didn’t want to have to explain to him how I could end up in the mysterious great general’s chamber in the first place.

I nodded slowly. “Yes, My Lord..now that I know I am—half demon…” I grimaced when I stated the last part, “perhaps I can find out the truth about my past in the underworld..”

For a good five minutes he looked thoughtful, then he said slowly, “Yes, that makes sense..but are you aware of the risk? Do you know how dangerous that place is?”

I gulped. Of course I knew. “I will take the risk, My Lord.. I just can’t stay here and become.. a threat.” Either way I might get killed anyway. I hadn’t told him that I already had black-out twice, and I doubted that Lord Raphael would stay nice to me after he knew that I was seriously a threat and therefore needed to be eliminated..

“Then I will go with you.”

“No.” I said hastily, making Lord Raphael kind of startled that I declined his offer so quickly, so I added, “My Lord don’t have to..risk your life for me..” in fact, I was afraid that during the journey to the underworld I would have a black-out and try to kill him.

“Why not..?” he muttered to himself, seemed rather amused for reasons I couldn’t see. “So,” he went back to me, “What kind of help I can give you then?”

“Ah..I was hoping you could tell me..the location of the gate to the underworld..and help me with the means to get there..” red tainted my cheeks for I felt somehow ashamed.

“Yes, I can do that. When do you plan to leave?”

I thought for a moment before answering, “The sooner the better, My Lord..I think of tonight, if it’s possible..” I didn’t know how much longer I had before the demon blood’s completely active.

“I see. But are you sure about this?” he asked once again. I nodded in determination and Lord Raphael

stated grimly, “Very well. You have already made up your mind. Now..how are you going to tell your husband?”

At once I remembered that Lord Mikael had told him about our marriage the previous day, and I felt awkward because I didn’t know how Lord Raphael react to that. He looked impartial, but who knew what’s in his heart, and I must admit I didn’t like the thought that I had upset him. “I..I don’t think..I can tell him..” I stuttered, referring to Lord Mikael.

“I understand..” Lord Raphael nodded with concern, “But you know then, how angry he will be if you leave him without explanation?”

I looked down and said weakly, “That is..also a risk I have to take..” My heart ached at the thought of leaving Lord Mikael. I couldn’t imagine how painful it would be for him..everyone he loved left him.. I hoped he wouldn’t think that I betrayed him.

“Lunalea..” Lord Raphael addressed me softly. I looked up and, realizing he had got up from his chair, I got up also. “I have another appointment..with the King.” He told me.

“Oh!” I bowed down apologetically, “Forgive me for detaining you, My Lord..”

“Don’t apologize.” He smiled. He walked up to the door and opened it, holding it for me as I exited the room. Lord Raphael closed the door after him and stood in front of me, saying, “I am the one who should apologize to you..for bringing you this bad news..”

I shook my head. “No, I am grateful you tell me the truth, My Lord..no matter how bitter it is..” I replied in cracked voice.

He leaned slightly towards me and placed his hand on my shoulder, stroking it gently. “I don’t know how shocked you are..but you should just rest for today, you don’t have to work.” He said. “And if you stick with your decision..meet me tonight at the stable.”

I nodded and murmured thank you.

Then we headed for opposite directions; Lord Raphael went to the King’s hall, and I intended to go to the infirmary, despite his advice to rest. I was hoping that working would distract my troubled

mind for a while. I needed that. I had received too much information in such a short period of time and it felt like my head's going to burst.

As I was pacing slowly, someone suddenly grabbed my waist from behind and lifted up my body. I shrieked. "My Lord!" I gasped when I realized it was my husband, Lord Mikael. My heart started thumping wildly; Since when did he stand behind me?

He started walking fast-paced while carrying me, and I could do nothing but to wrap my arms around his neck. "Is there something you wish to tell me?" muttered Lord Mikael, loud enough for me to hear. He didn't look at me, but I could see from his expression that he was irritated and upset. And jealous.

I stiffened. Did he saw me with Lord Raphael? Did he hear what we were talking? No, it couldn't be. It's highly unlikely for Lord Mikael to do something as despicable as eavesdropping. Besides, if he knew I was…no, I couldn't say it. It's too horrible.

“So you choose to confide your secrets to Raphael, instead to me?” he said icyly, before I could even answer his first question . The coldness in his voice made me want to cry.

“My Lord..I think you misunderstand..” I replied, my voice quavering.

“Oh, I do, don’t I?” he hissed sarcastically.

“Yes..” I spoke in a whisper, my eyes were brimming with tears. “I was talking to Lord Raphael about some potions he is developing..” I lied, feeling awful. I hated not to tell him the truth, but I just couldn’t reveal it to him; how could I?? I was afraid of what his reaction might be. I couldn’t bear seeing his love for me turned into hatred.

“Sure you were.” Snapped Lord Mikael, indicating that he didn’t believe a word I said. I was a lousy liar.

At that time we had reached his palace, and some maids that we encountered were staring at us in complete curiosity after they made bows. I felt my cheeks burned in embarrassment, but Lord Mikael was oblivious to our surroundings.

“My Lord..I don’t understand why you are so upset…” I said warily.

He pouted—if only he’s not mad, I would think he’s cute. “I’m not upset.” He growled, “I’m perfectly fine. I’m fine with your hiding things from me; I’m fine with the fact that you don’t trust me enough.”

“That’s not true!” I cried desperately.

Finally he looked at me, and forced a smile. A painful one. And it hurted my heart. “Sure. I’m just rambling.” He said, still with the sarcastic tone. I barely noticed we had reached his chamber already—Lord Mikael kicked the door open.

We went in, he kicked the door close, and he threw me roughly on to the bed. I gasped in shock, and before I could manage to sit up, he trapped me under his body. Holding both of my wrist firmly, he leaned down and started kissing me fiercely, on my lips and my neck. I tried to protest, but it only made him hold me tighter. Tears leaking from my eyes, there’s no tenderness in his action, I could only feel pain and sorrow hidden under the harshness.

“Mikael..” I whimpered, unconsciously addressing him only by his name, “please..stop..”

Lord Mikael didn’t seem to hear my plea, or he did hear but decided to ignore it. Instead he ripped the front of my dress to give him access to my chest. Right, another torn dress.. Now while kissing me fervently, his right hand cupped my breast and squeezed it, a little too hard, and I screamed in pain.

“Mikael!” I cried loudly.

To my surprise, he sat up abruptly, looking at me with bewildered expression. I swore I saw a hint of guilt in his eyes. Lord Mikael then turned around and sat on the edge of the bed, resting his forehead on his palm. I heard him draw a sharp breath.

I sat up slowly. Watching his somehow lonely back made me feel guilty myself. I reached out and touched his back. He didn’t react. I moved forward and gently wrapped my arms around his torso.

“Forgive me..” he said in shattered voice, “I’m such an idiot who cannot control his emotion..”

I shook my head, but didn't say anything. I didn't know what to say..I might end up confessing everything if I opened my mouth, and I couldn't risk it..

Lord Mikael placed his hand on top of mine, his calloused fingers slowly rubbing the back of my hand. "I'm afraid, you know.. I'm afraid of losing you.." he slowly confessed, obviously revealing his weakness was difficult for him, "when I saw you with Raphael, I just.. I don't know…" his voice faltered.

"Will you forgive me?" he turned around and looked at me straight in the eyes.

I just nodded and smiled weakly, then I gave him a chaste kiss, silently saying 'forgive me too..'

When the kiss broke, Lord Mikael smiled back at me. A large part of pain in his eyes was gone, but some still remained I could tell. He hugged me tightly, but gently this time. His warmth made me feel safe and relaxed, made it more difficult for me to leave..I loved him..and that's why I must leave him..he's not safe when I was around.

Just then we heard a knock on the door. Lord Mikael reluctantly let go of me and walked towards it. Whoever it was outside, he surely wouldn't allow him/her go inside his chamber, not when his wife was on his bed with torn dress. He opened the door. I couldn't see who was outside nor hear what they were talking.

A few minutes later Lord Mikael closed the door and went back to bed. To me. His face troubled.

"What is it..?" I whispered, getting up from the bed.

"I have to go." He said gravely, "A large army of demons have been sighted marching from the east towards this castle."

[Mikael POV]

Lunalea's beautiful dark blue eyes widened. "But you've just got back." She said, worried. I was glad that she concerned about me, and I felt foolish just a few minutes ago I felt extremely jealous about her and Raphael. And I deeply regretted treating her harshly; she didn't deserve it.

I smiled lovingly and caressed her face. “Don’t worry..I’ll just eradicate those pests quickly, and return to you..” I told her. I noticed for a split second Lunalea cringed when I said ‘those pests’, but then it was replaced by a gentle smile.

“Just be careful..and be safe..” she said.

After that I allowed her to place another protective ward. She said the last one wasn’t strong enough and she blamed herself for my injuries. I said “Don’t blame yourself. It’s just me being careless.” Maybe if she didn’t place any ward my injuries would be more severe. I hated to admit it, but recently the demons seemed to be getting stronger, like their energy been boosted. Must be because of that crap about the rising of a new leader that lifted their spirit. It’s so troublesome.

Lunalea also helped me to put on my armor. And just when I bid my farewell, I got this ill-feeling out of the blue. Well, perhaps it’s because of that flash of guilt I saw in her eyes. I knew she keep secrets from me, and I didn’t want to force her to share them with me if she didn’t want to. It hurted me, to think that she

didn’t trust me enough, but I reckoned it would take some time to trust someone, even if that someone’s your spouse.

I took one last look at my beloved wife before I left the chamber. Seeing her frail figure made me want to run back to her and hold her and never let go. But I reminded myself that I was a warrior that served this kingdom. I would never rest before the war’s over and peace’s once again brought into this land.

[Lunalea POV]

Once Lord Mikael left, I reached for my canvas bag. I would leave for the underworld tonight. I had to, before he returned from the battle. What a convenient coincidence wasn’t it, that he had to go to the battlefield when I decided to silently leave? I wiped my tears and sniffed, pulling out a purple leather covered book from my bag. A spell book.

I skipped 100 first pages of the book, the part that I had remembered by heart—the curative and defensive spells—and went straight to the part that contained offensive spells. I knew it was impossible to memorize all of it, but I would try my best to learn

a few spells that might come handy in case I had to confront a demon—or a pack of demons. The fire spell looked promising, but I doubt I had enough power to use it. Plus the fact that now was autumn and the weather must be cold and windy, making it difficult to gather the natural forces to enhance the fire spell. So I focused on tornado spell and frost spell.

Time flew.

When it was time for dinner I changed my clothes and went to the dining hall. It was quite empty; most of the warriors must be out with Lord Mikael. And I noticed Lady Gabriel wasn't in her place too. The only ones who sat on the high table were Lord Raphael..and the King himself. The King was a young man, probably in his mid twenties, apparently younger than Lord Raphael and Lord Mikael. He had a short wavy brown hair and a pair of dark brown eyes. His skin was pale because he was rarely exposed to the sunlight; I heard he had a sensitive skin. This evening His Highness wore a simple

crimson red robe, with a gold crown adorned with rubies sat comfortably on the top of his head.

During dinner, I felt the King staring at my direction a few times. I knew because somehow I felt uneasy. But when I stole a glance, he was looking elsewhere. It's creepy, so I finished my meal as fast as possible then left the hall and went to the kitchen. I asked for two large chunks of bread—a little provision for my journey, before I went back to Lord Mikael's chamber.

I packed the bread along with a dozen vials of elixir. I also took a dagger from Lord Mikael's weapon rack, just in case—we couldn't always depend on magic. Then I slung my bag over my shoulder and put on a black hooded-cloak. After that I waited until midnight, silently reciting the offensive spells I had learned earlier.

The midnight came with a coldness that bit my bones. I made my way stealthily to the stable, avoiding any guard on sentry duty. I felt very nervous and afraid, I questioned my decision, but then I reminded myself that I had no choice.

Lord Raphael had waited for me, his bluish white robe was concealed beneath a dark blue cloak. However, the horse that stood next to him was striking white. It's his horse, White Shadow, said to be the fastest horse in this kingdom. As I approached him, I noticed another horse and a man stood beside Lord Raphael. The horse was coal black and the man was tall and slim, wearing a dark green hooded-cloak with a quiver full of arrows attached to his back. I was suddenly alarmed.

"Lunalea." Lord Raphael addressed me, and I bowed slightly. He looked tensed and couldn't hide his anxiety. "This is Arnvid." He introduced the man, "He's one of the King's personal soldiers, a notable hunter and archer. He will accompany you on your journey."

Arnvid made a bow for me. "It's an honor to escort a fair lady on a dangerous journey." He stated politely. From up close I could see that he had a dark skin and a dark hair, and a scar across his face—running from his temple to his left ear. He looked calm yet dangerous. When he eyed me with his sharp green

eyes, I felt a shiver running down my spine. His gaze was of an expert in calculating someone's or something's strength and capability.

"Take this." Lord Raphael handed me a folded parchment, apparently a map. "The gate to the underworld is on the valley of Strangard Mountain. Just head north. It should take you two days to reach it." He explained to me. I nodded solemnly, putting the map into my bag. "And take White Shadow." I gave me the harness of his horse.

I took it hesitantly, asking, "Are you sure, My Lord?"

He smiled and nodded. "Absolutely. This is the least I can do for you."

"This is more than I dare to expect, My Lord." I said gratefully.

"Just make sure you come back safe, Lunalea..." Lord Raphael leaned forward and whispered something in my ear. Something that made me completely shocked, made me feel happy and scared at the same time. And I found myself staring at him in disbelief. He just nodded in comprehension.

Still in the state of daze, I let Lord Raphael helped me mount White Shadow. He then patted the nose of his horse affectionately. “Take care of her, will you White Shadow?” The horse snorted in response. I glanced to my side and noticed Arnvid had already mounted his horse, then I looked back at Lord Raphael.

“My Lord..” I began.

He stopped me by placing a finger upon his lips. “Ride safe.” He said, his melodic voice drifting in the wind. Then he patted White Shadow once again, harder this time, sending the beast galloping away. I jerked in surprise, tightening my grip on the harness. I took one last glance on my chief healer before I looked straight forward, riding into the night. Arnvid and his horse closely followed. What laid before me were darkness and uncertainty.

***

Phew..^^; I sure hope you like this part..I’ve worked hard..

As usual, please review and comment..and vote if you like what you read ^^ Thx!

And thank you so much for reading!! I am grateful.

Chapter 16

[pt.16] The Worst Scenario

I’m so sorry I was delayed..T.T..to make up for it, I write this part longer..hope you don’t get tired reading it..=p

Dedicated to all my fans…I don’t know what I’d do without you guys..You really are my source of energy. =)

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Part 16

--People don’t fight for justice, people don’t fight for world peace.

In the end, people only fight for their own selfish reason.--

Quick recap: While Mikael went to the battlefield, Lunalea, with the help of Raphael, was planning to go on a journey to the gate of the underworld in the valley of Strangard Mountain. She was accompanied by a hunter named Arnvid.

[Mikael POV]

The dawn broke with my deafening war cry as I drew and pointed my sword towards the swarming army of demons, a horde of ugly grey creatures, in the horizon: “Let’s crush the enemies under our feet!! Sally forth my brave soldiers!!” Three hundreds horsemen answered my call in unison, with cries as loud as mine. Burned in fighting spirit, we charged. Red Hare and I were on the front line.

Up on the cliff, Gabriel and her eighty archers emerged to bring down a rain of fiery arrows upon our mutual foes.

The demons growled and roared, swinging their maces. Weapons clashed, blood splattered. Before

long, I found myself lost in a battle frenzy. My senses seemed to be shut down from the surrounding, I trusted myself fully to my body's instinctive movements and reactions that I had sharpened for years. It's as if my sword went alive, and it was the one who controlled my hand. The demons attack me from all direction, but I could easily parry them.

In the back of my eyes, I could see the image of Lunalea, smiling warmly. And as I was hacking the demons all around me, I thought about our future. Our future without the war. Then I saw her face just before I left…the sorrow and guilt in her eyes…

"MIKAEL!!" somewhere in the distant I could hear Gabriel screamed at the top of her lungs.

Then, before I could turn and yell back, I felt a sudden and sharp pain on the right lower side of my torso. I looked down to see a spear broke through my armor and pierced my flesh; deep, but not deep enough thanks to the protective ward. At the other end of the spear was a bulky demon who barred its shark-like set of teeth. Sparks of black electricity danced around the arm that held the spear.

I growled and grabbed the spear with my left hand, attempting to pull the demon and to fling it into the air. Yet that nasty monster was stead fast to the ground. Instead, devoting all of its might, it tried to yank me from Red Hare. I almost fell, and cursed myself for my weakness. 'Damn. I must admit this jerks's pretty strong' I thought to myself angrily.

Swiftly, before giving the chance for the demon to try and pull me down again, I raised the sword on my right hand and brought it down to cut the spear's iron handle in half. The tip of my sword was lined by diamond, so it's extremely sharp. I tossed aside the half that stabbed me, blood was quickly oozing from the open wound but I ignore it.

The demon roared in rage, tossing aside the other half of the spear and jumping me with bare hands (its claws looked sharp enough though). I was faster than it; I pulled Red Hare's rein hard, making the beast raise its front legs and stomp the demon down. It fell flat on the ground, facing upward, with Red Hare's hoofs pressed against its chest, crushing its rib cage.

I quickly jumped down from Red Hare's back and pointed my sword to the demon's neck. It's still alive, I noticed. I stamped on its right arm. Its bone snapped and the demon groaned in pain. I looked down on it in disgust. "Are you Zeva?" I asked coldly.

Though the demon was choked in its own blood, it managed to throw a maniacal laughter. "When she's fully awake, she is far more stronger than I." It growled. I was kind of surprised it could actually talk like human.

Wait. "She?" I inquired. 'This Zeva, the supposedly new leader of the demon army, is a female demon?' It's not like I was the kind of person who doubted the leadership of my opposite sex, I just found it hard to believe.

The demon laughed again. The sound made me sick, so I slit its throat to end its suffering right away.

"Mikael!" I turned around to see Gabriel riding her steed Faulkner towards me and she looked mad. Now she's an example of a good female leader, though I didn't like to admit it. "You are distracted!" She

shouted, accusing me. “Don’t bring your domestic problem into the battlefield!”

“I’m not .” I answered shortly and cooly, beheading a demon which hurtled towards me from behind without even looking at it, just to emphasize my point.

Gabriel snorted. “Keep it that way.” She said before turning to her left, and head-shot a demon who was engaged with one of my melee soldiers. Show-off. I wouldn’t lose to her. I would kill more demons than she would.

[Lunalea POV]

About one hour after the dawn broke, Arnvid and I found old ruins of what used to be a temple, from the look of it. We made shelter and took some rest there. The horses went grazing, and drinking water from a pond nearby. We didn’t tie them because they were loyal animals that wouldn’t runaway leaving their masters.

Arnvid excused himself to go hunting, while I attempted to light a fire using magic. Luckily the air

was still, so I succeeded in the first try. After the fire was lit, I boiled some water in a small pot Arnvid gave me.

As I sat waiting, my mind flew to what Lord Raphael whispered to me last night..I still couldn't believe it. He said when he checked my pulse he picked up another pulse, weaker and more subtle..and there's only one explanation. I should have known..then may be I would reconsider this journey..But now it's too late. My mind was already set, and though I felt worried now more than ever, I told myself that I must be strong..

By the time the water's bubbling hot, the hunter's back, bringing what looked like some meat ready to be boiled. Apparently he had skinned his game somewhere, and I was grateful for it—I didn't think I could stand the sight of it.. He dumped the meat and some herbs into the pot, then stirred them all with a wooden spoon. It smelled scrumptious.

When the stew was ready, Arnvid scooped some into a bowl and offered it to me. I took it saying "Thank you." and in return gave him some bread I brought.

We ate the breakfast in silence. I was grateful the hunter was a quiet person, he didn't pry into my business.

It was then that I saw red smoke rising in the east and felt wary. Arnvid saw it too and he said with a proud smirk, "Our allies win the battle." He referred to Lord Mikael and Lady Gabriel's troops.

I turned to him. "Already?" I knew my husband was powerful, but I didn't know how powerful, because I never get to see him in an actual battle—not that I wanted to. Just by hearing stories about it, I had already decided that I didn't like a battle. I didn't like the fierce expressions when soldiers and demons were slaying each other, nor did I like the gory aftermath.

"That red smoke signals it. They burn the carcasses." Explained Arnvid.

Deja-vu hit me; burned carcasses, red and black..death hung thick in the air..the night I was found. I shuddered, trying to get rid of the image in my head.

“You may have some sleep if you wish so, My Lady.” Said Arnvid after we had finished our breakfast, “I will stay on guard.”

“Oh..I don’t think I want some sleep..” I replied. I was afraid that I would have a black-out again if I allowed myself to sleep. Earlier I had drink a vial of tonic when I felt fatigue, and the effect hadn’t worn out.

The hunter looked at me questioningly. But I didn’t try to explain myself, and he didn’t force me to. “Very well. If you’re sure, we can just continue the journey.” He got up, packing his things and preparing to leave.

“Uhm..but if you need it.., we can rest some more..” I stuttered, somehow feeling rather guilty to make someone didn’t get a decent sleep. If something was to happen to him..if he somehow still felt fatigue.. (I might say this was my consciousness as a healer.)

Arnvid smiled derisively. “I’m a hunter, Lady. I’ll be fine without sleep for one or two days.”

But still I felt responsible, so I gave him one of my tonic. “At least drink this then. It’ll refresh you.” I said.

He looked at the vial suspiciously, then muttered “Thank you” before storing it away inside his pocket.

After the horses were called, we continued our journey north. Far in the distance I could make out the ragged outline of Strangard Mountain and I felt a cold clutch on my chest. I was getting closer to the devil’s lair..this journey wouldn’t get easier.

[Mikael POV]

The battle was over, and of course the victory was ours. We had slain every demon and let none escape. We also managed to keep our losses to the minimum. This great success made the soldiers elated, and they marched back to the castle singing the victory song joyfully.

Though I shared their excitement, there’s this bad feeling I couldn’t shake off. My wife, Lunalea…I needed to see her at once. I needed to make sure that she’s okay. My logic laughed and said, ‘what could

possibly go wrong? She's in the castle, in your chamber. She's perfectly safe.' It's true, but still..I was restless.

Once we're back in the castle and I had put Red Hare safely in the stable (I barely noticed that White Shadow, Raphael's horse, was not in its place), I went straight to my palace. The wound on my torso was still bleeding and my head was throbbing, but I paid no attention. It was late in the afternoon and Lunalea must had already been back from the infirmary if she went to work today. She would take care of my physical injuries, and the mental ones for sure.

I must admit I felt so ashamed of myself. I was caught off guard.

What was waiting for me inside my chamber was not my lovely wife Lunalea, but five bulky guards—the King's personal guards, judging from their uniform. The moment I stepped in, three of them grabbed me from both sides and front. I roared angrily and struggled to escape, but another guard appeared and shoved a piece of cloth onto my mouth. A pungent smell suddenly infiltrated my nose and I felt dizzy,

my vision blurred. I kept struggling, but my power was slipping away. All the exhaustion hit me while the grip on my limbs tightened. I muttered a curse before I lost my consciousness.

[Lunalea POV]

It's late afternoon when we came into a halt at the edge of a forest. Before us was the sea of gold and red of autumn trees; beautiful, yet intimidating at the same time. I checked the map Lord Raphael gave me. This must be the Adair Woods; we must go through this woods to reach the valley of Strangard Mountain.

The wind blew towards us, bringing some creepy mysterious sounds from the woods. I shivered and tightened my cloak. So far our journey had been smooth and without obstacles; through fields and open places. We didn't come across any demon (didn't encounter any human either). But this woods was a different story..I was pretty sure terrifying creatures lurk in its depth, waiting for their preys..

Arnvid saw my hesitation and said, "There's no other way but to go forth, My Lady."

“I know.” I replied weakly. Unconsciously I placed my left hand on my stomach and gritted my teeth. ‘I will prevail no matter what, for the sake of this child..’ I thought solemnly.

Then slowly we moved forward, our horses walking rather than galloping. I felt my body tensed when we entered the woods, the shadows of the trees were enveloping us. Arnvid rode in the front, his bow at the ready. I followed him, putting my trust in his hunter’s instinct. White Shadow stomped its hoofs impatiently, showing disapproval to our slow pace. No doubt it wanted to run fast like it used to do, but we must be wary and proceed with extra caution now.

The sun set and it’s getting darker as we went deeper into the woods. All around us was silence; no wolf howling, no owl hooting. The intense was killing me.

After about an hour, suddenly Arnvid stopped his horse. He looked around with a stern and restrained expression.

“What is it?” I whispered cautiously.

“Trouble.” He replied, half whispering half growling. “We’re surrounded.”

I wanted to ask ‘by what?’ but my unspoken question was already answered by the sounds of snarling and rumbling from between the trees. My whole body stiffened, I felt chill down my spine. Pairs of red eyes emerged from the darkness. They approached us inch by inch.

I saw no other option but to fight them—whatever they were—and Arnvid apparently thought the same, because he raised his bow and shot the nearest creature right between the eyes. It fell dead with a howl. The other creatures snarled at us louder, furious. Arnvid prepared to shoot another one before they jumped at us all at once. I muttered the freezing spell under my breath, focusing my power towards both of my hands and at the same time gathering the energy from the chill air surrounding me.

When Arnvid successfully head-shot another creature, the others attacked us simultaneously from all direction. They were demons for sure, mud-grey creatures with claws and sharp teeth. I was shocked

at the sight of these horrifying beings, but I quickly recovered and hurtled my magic power towards two demons attacking from my right. My hands felt cold and numb as flashes of blue shot from them. As soon as these flashes hit the demons, they were freezed.

From my peripheral vision I could see Arnvid drew his machete and beheaded a demon attacking from his left. Another demon jumped from behind him—I turned around and shot the freezing spell at it. I barely noticed Arnvid beheaded another demon as I freezed one remaining demon. All of these happened so quickly I was surprised I could react quite well. I was surprised we could defeat them—without a scratch!

I looked around feeling sick; two headless demons laid on the ground covered in blood, four demons freezed blue, and somewhere near two more demons laid dead with arrows piercing through their skull. Then I looked at Arnvid, who was looking at me in awe.

“Clearly I have misjudged you, My Lady.” He complimented me, gesturing towards the four demons I overtook. “I am impressed.”

“That makes the two of us..” I replied feebly. Somehow I felt like I was going to faint; my head felt so heavy..and the headache..why did it choose to strike me now??

“My Lady, are you okay? You look pale.” Arnvid sounded concerned. Strangely, he also sounded so far—must be something wrong with my hearing..

‘It feels good, doesn’t it? Killing..’ said a menacing voice inside my head.

‘What? Who’s talking??’ I pressed my palm against the side of my head, as if it could alleviate the pain and silence the voice. Of course it couldn’t.

‘Ahh..I want to kill more..’ said the voice again.

‘NO!! Get out of my head!’

“My Lady?” it was Arnvid. I looked up at him through hazy eyes. He looked back at me with widened eyes.

The hunter seemed concerned and…alarmed? Terrified? Was he terrified of me?

I opened my mouth to say something, but suddenly I felt a very strong pull on my stomach—just like in my dream..only now I was wide awake. My head was pounding wildly and my vision becoming blur. Then realization hit me. 'No!!' I screamed frantically. I tried to fight back, resisting the darkness that seemed to envelop me tighter and tighter, but the pull was too strong—the demon blood was too strong. I knew it tried to take control of my consciousness… and I deeply regret to say that it succeeded. The last thing I heard before I fell into the absolute darkness was the high-pitched laughter of a woman. And the woman was me.

***

…And that's it for Part 16..! Do you enjoy it? I hope you do..^.^

Please review and comment..and vote if you like my story. Many thanks! Love you all!!

And thanks for reading of course! xoxo.

Chapter 17

[pt.17] The Truth and The Memory

Ugh...the translation work was driving me krezy, what do they think I am, a transtool..? I swear next time they have to pay me higher! =p Anyway, it's done now so I can continue writing my story..Yaay! I'm sorry and I thank you for the wait..

Okay, without further ado, may I ^_^ present you..

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Part 17

Quick recap: Mikael went back from the battle and was captured by the king's personal guards. Meanwhile, Lunalea and Arnvid went into the

hideous Adair Woods and confronted some demons. They won the fight, but then something wrong happened to Lunalea…

[Mikael POV]

When I came to, I found myself chained to the cold stone walls of the dungeon, clad only in my tunic and slacks, stripped off of my weapons. I noticed that my wounds had already been healed. A patch of black sky I saw from a small barred window telling me it's night already. Outside the cell, Raphael stood watching me in silence—his bluish white robe was unmistakable. The moonlight that fell upon his face made his pale skin looked unnaturally white.

"What the meaning of this, Raphael?" I growled crossly. "Is this my reward for winning the battle?" I threw a sarcastic remark. Why didn't I find it surprising that he was behind all this?

"Do not be angry, Mikael, this is only a means of prevention." He said with a calmness that made me sick.

I frowned. "Prevention? What prevention?"

“Prevention from your ruining the plan. At any cost I have to prevent you from looking for Lunalea.”

Lunalea! Suddenly rage burned my whole body. “Where’s my wife? What did you do to her?!” I roared, the chains rattled as I tried to yank them off the wall (Unfortunately they made a good job when building this dungeon). “And what plan are you talking about??” I didn’t like what his sentences implied. He had a plan, which I didn’t know, which involved my wife! And he asked me not to be angry!

“I’ll tell you, but you need to calm down.” Said Raphael, still maintained his cool voice despite all the anger I hurled at him.

“You want me to calm down?!” I shouted, “You tell me where my wife is!!”

“Calm down and I will tell you everything!” the chief healer raised the tone of his voice.

I glared at him, trying hard to suppress my fury. “Fine!” I said through gritted teeth, “Tell me.” I lifted my chin up in an arrogant way, challenging him.

Raphael was not ignited. He took a deep breath before starting, “First of all, it’s not coincidence I found Lunalea that day about a year ago. Lord Uriel has foreseen it and told me about it. He said she was the key to end the war, but whether the victory would go to the humans or the demons was not yet foreordained.”

He paused and scrutinized my expression. But I remained passive, though the gears in my head working hard to process this new information and to connect it to what I had already known. I had heard that Lord Uriel was a clairvoyant and that his visions were always accurate, but he was an enigmatic man that I couldn’t easily believe. Who knew if he lied and actually had an agenda of his own?

Seeing me keep silent, Raphael continued, “When I did find Lunalea, I intended to elicit any information from her that would shed light to Lord Uriel’s prophecy—I didn’t calculate the possibility of her losing her memory. Then after I brought her to this castle and ran a test on her blood, I learned that Lunalea is..different.”

I raised my eyebrows, curious. “How?”

“She’s a half-demon.”

I laughed out loud. “That’s absurd! Of course she’s human!” I exclaimed. But deep inside I wasn’t sure myself..The guilty look on her face kept haunting me. ’Lunalea and her secret..secret she wouldn’t tell me..Is this it?’ I thought bitterly, ‘does she know all along that she’s a half-demon? Is she hiding this horrible truth from me all of this time?’ My heart hurted I felt gravely betrayed.

I guessed my uncertainty must had been apparent for Raphael to see, because he gave me this ‘pity’ look. “She looks human because her demon blood has been dormant until recently.” He explained grimly. “If only it stays dormant, I wouldn’t have to bother her mind with the truth..perhaps I even wouldn’t have to execute the plan..”

“You mean she has just known this recently?” I asked, quickly grasping the underlying meaning of his sentences.

“Yes.”

I gave a small sigh, couldn't help feeling relief because it turned out she didn't betray me. Perhaps she was afraid to tell me.. afraid of my reaction. To think that she held a secret this huge and still stayed by my side.. It must be a dillema for her. If only she told me…

'What?' I heard myself ask sarcastically, 'What would you do if she told you the truth? Would you kill her, because she's from the same kind with those who slaughtered your whole family?'

'No! I would never do that!' my other self disagreed.

'Don't deny it, you hate demons to the core. Every demon is evil. Your wife included…'

'No!! She's not evil!'

'How do you know..? You haven't seen her turn into a demon..'

'Stop it!!' I shut my eyes tightly for a few seconds, trying to clear my head off the self-argument. When I opened my eyes again, Raphael was watching me serenely, like he was trying to read my mind. "What?" I barked, feeling irritated, "She's a half-

demon, so what? I still need to know where she is now! And what is the plan you're talking about?"

For a few moments Raphael's face contorted in pain. "Do you know about the underworld?" he asked back. I growled and nodded, of course I knew. It's the world of the demons. "Then, you know that no mortal man has ever succeeded in finding the way there?"

I frowned, yes, I knew that too. To reach the gate to the underworld in the valley of Strangard Mountain, one must go through the Adair Woods, a forest thick with dark energy. This energy was even more dangerous than the demons who resided there. Once, a late king ordered a thousand of his soldiers to march through the woods, intending to launch an attack straight to the underworld and hoping to end the war once and for all. Yet this strategy was a total failure. Each and every single soldier dispatched never went back. Ever since that great loss, many hunters and trackers were sent to observe the forest. Only a few returned to tell the tale: the path to the

underworld would not be revealed before the eyes of mortal men.

I drew myself from my thought and stared sharply at Raphael. “What are you trying to say?”

He swallowed hard before saying, “Lunalea is.. not entirely a mortal. The plan is to use her as a guide to show the path to the underworld.”

Anger was coursing through my veins once more. “You sent her, alone, to the underworld??” I hissed in disbelief. “Are you insane?! She could get killed!!”

“She’s not alone. The King’s trusted hunter, Arnvid, and my White Shadow are with her.” He corrected. I recalled that Raphael’s steed was not in the stable. But seriously, did he really think a hunter and a horse could protect her?? If only look could kill, Raphael would have been dead now under my stare. It’s surprising how he could continue acting so calm; either he concealed his feelings too well or he didn’t even have feelings. “She won’t be harmed, Mikael. She’s one of them.”

“How can you be so sure?!”

“..I’m not.” He stated. The look on his face when he said that made me want to strangle his neck. Raphael saw my anger but was oblivious to it. Then he continued, “Besides that fact, right now she’s the strongest person in the world.” I stared at him, curious. My Lunalea, the strongest person? It’s hard to believe since she always seem so fragile. “She will survive; she will do anything to survive. Any pregnant woman will do anything for the sake of her baby.” Raphael explained.

I felt like my eyes were going to pop out. “What!!” I yelled, utterly shocked. ‘My wife is pregnant..my wife is pregnant..I’m going to have a baby..I’m going to be a father—‘ my mind chanted happily.

‘That if they survive!’ my other self snapped. And a new wave of fury rushed over me.

“Let me go, Raphael!” I roared, pulling the chain as strong as I could until the cold metal grip around both of my wrists hurted me. “I swear if anything bad happens to my wife and my baby I will slow choke the life from you!!”

The chief healer didn't respond. Instead he said coolly, "I think I've said enough. Now excuse me, I have other things I have to attend to." and started walking away.

Though I knew Raphael wouldn't turn around, I still shouted his name to his retreating back in frustation. Damn him!

[Lunalea POV]

I woke up with a gasp. The first thing I saw was the ceiling above me, and it was eerily familiar. I sat up and looked around warily.

I recognized this room.. The cream-coloured walls, the simple wooden table with a stack of books on it, the wooden cabinet next to it…and the small bed I was sitting on… This was my room. Not the room I used in the castle, but the room I used before I lost my memory.

Wait. Did I say this was my room before I lost my memory? Then did it mean that I started to remember about my past? I hoped so.

I looked at myself and realized I wasn't in a dress and cloak I wore when leaving the castle. Instead I wore a simple brown dress which I knew was my very own. The thing that made me startled was that the front of the dress tainted by blood. I wasn't injured—I didn't feel any physical pain—so the blood must belong to someone else…and the question was..Who?

Right at that moment I picked up a sound of a woman's crying from the other room. I was suddenly alarmed, but then I felt relaxed because somehow I knew who the woman was.

I got up, my bare feet stung by the coldness of the floor, and strode waryly towards the door. It was slightly open, and a soft light shone through the gap. Slowly I pushed the door to open wider.

There's a woman sat by a table, her black hair—so much like mine—fell straight passed her shoulders down to her waist. Her elbows rested on the table and she pressed her forehead with both palms. Her shoulders slowly rose and fell due to her sobbing.

She immediately noticed my presence and looked up. She gasped and went rigid for a second. After staring into my eyes, like looking for something there, she quickly wiped away her tears.

“Mother.” I heard myself spoke. Surprise and disbelief hit me. Strange. At the same time I felt like I’d known this woman all my life. She really was my mother! I inherited a pair of dark blue eyes from her, I could see.

“You wake up, Zeva.” She said, giving me a weak smile. ‘That name..’ I thought, startled, ‘somehow it feels so right to be called that by her.’ I gazed at my mother and saw the expression on her fair face which hinted that she’s holding back a pain.

I longed to run to her and hug her, longed to make her feel better, but instead I walked slowly towards her. Frowning, I asked, “Why are you crying?” And I felt odd…it’s like I was inside someone else’s body and all I did was watching her every move passively.

“It’s nothing.” My mother answered shortly.

When I was only about three steps away from her, I noticed blood stains on the left shoulder of her dress and a newly-healed wound peeked from the hem of her neckline—it's pink closer to red against her pale skin. Suddenly a wave of guilt and anger washed through me. I groaned loud, "I did it again, didn't I, mother?? It means the ward the old witch put on me doesn't work!"

My mother stood up and at once gave me hug in a motherly affection. "It's alright, Zeva." She whispered softly. Her embrace was so warmth and comfortable and made me want to cry. But then I pushed her away.

"No it's not alright!" I yelled, my eyes brimming with tears, "It's the third time I black-out and attack you this month! My illness is getting severe, just like the man foretold!"

She looked hurt, just like she always do when I mentioned 'the man'. Great. Now I didn't only hurt her physically, but mentally also. Why couldn't I shut my trap?! I was too scared to act calm. I feared for her…I could have killed her!

“We will fix you, I promise..” she said determinantly.

“How, mother?” I hissed, “We went to every healer and every witch in this kingdom, seeking for a cure. But none they gave me was working.” Desperation was apparent in my voice. Then I added slowly, “The man said he knew the cure—why don’t you just let me go with him?”

“NO!!” she screamed. I saw great fear in her eyes. “My greatest mistake is trusting him! I will not do so again!”

“Why?” I inquired, “Mother, who’s actually that man?”

My mother turned and walked towards the window facing the front of our little house. Her hands cluthed the windowsill so tightly her knuckles went white as she gazed at the dark night sky outside.

“Mother, I’m old enough to know the truth..” I pleaded.

She kept silent. I waited impatiently. Just as I about to ask again, she sighed heavily. She was still looking outside the window when she said, almost in a

whisper, “He is your father.” and before I could respond she added, “And he’s not human.”

I wasn’t supposed to be surprised, since Lord Raphael had told me one of my parents was a demon, but I found that I was surprised. So surprised I couldn’t say anything. I just stared at my mother’s back, with mixed feelings I couldn’t express.

“Zeva,” she suddenly said, without looking at me, and I noticed the panic and urgency in her voice. “Escape through the back door. Now.” She ordered.

I frowned, perplexed. “Mother?” I reached out and touched her shoulder. Her body was stiff! What’s going on? “What—?”

She turned around and stared at me with scared and pleading eyes. “Just go!”

“No! You havent explained—“ I stopped when I caught a glimpse of what outside the window was. A pack of monsters—I meant demons. Heading this way. Their grey skin and horrid appearance could be seen plainly under the full moonlight. My eyes

widened. “Mother, we have to run!” I shouted, pulling my mother’s wrist.

She yanked her hand free with a brute force that startled me. “It’s too late! You go, I’ll buy you some time.” She pushed me towards the back door. I was horrified and angry realizing her intention.

“What are you planning, Mother? I won’t let you sacrifice yourself!” I struggled to release her grip on my shoulders.

“Please, Zeva—“

Bam!

The sound of the front door collapsed made us stop dead in our tracks. My mother and I exchanged desperate looks. We both knew it’s too late to run.

Three bulky demons broke in while the rest of the pack waiting outside. Three pairs of red eyes were fixed on us, and wicked grin appeared on their scary faces.

It happened so quick I almost couldn’t believe it. Before I could blink, one of the demons lunged

towards my mother, she muttered something under her breath and repelled her attacker with a strong force of wind, then the second demon charged before my mother could utter another spell, its claws aiming for her neck. With a sharp terrifying crack, my mother fell to the floor, her neck's broken.

Seeing my mother's dead body turned my world upside down. Sorrow and anger filled me, like a raging storm. I screamed so loudly both my ears and my throat were hurt, "Noo!!! Mother!" I cried, tears spilled onto my cheeks. I threw myself to the floor and reached for my mother, but a strong hand grabbed my neck and lifted me off the ground. I coughed and choked, glaring at the demon who restrained me with bleary eyes and pure loathing. It was the tallest and largest of the three, no doubt the strongest. It's face reminded me of a snake.

"So you are Zeva." It hissed. I winced, how did it know my name? I gripped it's scaly wrist and struggled to escape. I wasn't surprised when it didn't budge. "Vaughan's daughter, eh?" it sneered,

scrutinizing me up and down. “So much for being the new leader. You are so small and weak.”

What the hell was it talking about? I didn’t understand a word it’s saying. I wanted to talk back, but I was having difficulty in breathing, let alone talking. All I could do was glaring at the snake-like demon.

It grinned widely. “You will be my new toy.” It stated, “And after I get bored, you’ll be my meal.” With that it stuck out its unnaturaly long tongue and licked my arm. Its greeny slimy saliva was so gross I felt like I was going to throw up.

“Haelock, the royal army is approaching.” Interrupted a demon.

The snake-like demon, Haelock, hissed angrily. “We’ll devour them!” Then it dropped me to the ground with a thud only to snatch my hair and drag me outside. My hands automatically flew upwards, trying to slacken the grip that began to hurt my scalp.

“Let go of me!” I screamed, although my throat hurt like mad. At the time I felt so angry my blood seems

to be boiled extremely hot. Somewhere in my head a mocking voice said, ‘You’re so useless without me.’ And I felt the now-familiar strong pull in my stomach; I knew what it meant.. The demon side in me was taking control. I was furious I thought, ‘Fine! Just slaughter those who bring me this sorrow. Behead the one who kill my mother!’ and I was more than willing to give up to the darkness that began to envelop me. I let my consciousness slipped away.

Dark. Again, with the darkness.. and flashes of red. I couldn’t move, I just..perceived everything around me with my senses; heard the screaming, the howling, the war cries, the choking sound, the clashing between metals; smelled the horrid iron-like smell of blood, the putrid smell of corpses, the smoke.. I wished I was dead already.

But I wasn’t dead. Yet.

An ice cold water drop fell onto my cheek, waking me abruptly. My eyelids flew open but before me was still a terrifying darkness. I blinked repeatedly to focus.

‘Where am I?’ I asked myself. My head hurted really really bad..did I crack my skull? Slowly I looked around, and I found myself in a dark cave-like chamber. The air was dead chill and thick with foul smell that made my stomach churned. All was silent except for the sound of water dripping from the ceiling.

I tried to sit up, and thanked God I wasn’t hurt. I tried to remember the dream I just had; the death of my mother..., a menacing demon named Haelock who mentioned about my demon-father… And with utter horror I realized it wasn’t a dream. It’s a memory.

It was then that I perceived someone else inside the chamber. A tall figure lurked in the shadow, standing silent in the corner, and I felt a sharp gaze on me, making me shudder. “Arnvid?” I called out, hopeful, though ninety percents of me knew it wasn’t him. The figure was too tall compared to the hunter’s.

Slowly the figure stepped forward. I gasped, aware that what stood before me couldn’t possibly be human. He looked human, without claws and horns, some of the demons’ attributes, but his skin was pale

grey and his eyes flaming red. And he had this evil expression carved permanently on his face.

He smiled—no, smirked—at me wickedly, then he opened his mouth, showing his shark-like yellow teeth, and said with a deep hoarse voice, “I know you will come sooner or later.” I frowned in bewilderment, and his next line sent me a shock wave: “Welcome home, my daughter.”

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Alright..thank you so much for taking your time to read this story..=D

I will really appreciate it if you leave a comment. Criticism is okay as long as it’s constructive, so I can improve my writing.

Before I leave, I have one question for you..”The opposite of the word ‘like’ is ‘hate’, then what is the opposite of the word ‘love’?”

Chapter 18

[pt.18] The Damsel in Distress

Hello again, everyone! =) this is the answer to the question I mentioned in [pt.17]:

The opposite of the word 'love' is 'indifference.' If you hate someone, it means you still care/think about him/her, but when you feel indifferent about someone, you don't care about him/her at all and in your eyes that someone does not even exist.

Okay, let's head to the story..hope you enjoy it! ;D

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Part 18

"Life is a circle of misery"

~Chibi Maruko-chan's sister~

Quick recap: Mikael was imprisoned in the dungeon when Raphael told him the truth about his wife, the prophecy, and the plan. Meanwhile Lunalea who was having a black-out regained some of her memory of the past, and when she's conscious she found herself in a dark cave-like chamber. A human-like demon greeted her..and addressed her as his daughter.

[Lunalea POV]

The funny thing about the truth is.. when we don't have it within our hands, we search for it; but when it turns out to be something horrible and painful, we refuse to believe in it. Perhaps it's true that what we don't know won't hurt us. And that was exactly what I felt then.

When the demon with a sinister look in front of me said, "Welcome home, my daughter," I was too shocked for a few moments I couldn't say anything and just sat there looking at him transfixed. Then my first impulse was: to deny.

I narrowed my eyes and retorted, "First, this is not my home. Second, who are you to say that I'm your daughter?" I was surprised my voice sounded firm enough for a shocked person.

The demon laughed a harsh sickening laugh. "Oh, forgive me, where are my manner?" he sneered, "I am Vaughan, your father. Didn't your mother tell you? No? Well I'm not surprised. She's dead now, I reckon, served her right." At this I clenched my fist in anger, but the demon seemed to be oblivious and went on, "Because you're my daughter, of course this is your home." He stared at me with his red eyes, seemingly amused. "This is the home of every demon, the underworld." He stated.

I was again shocked, but I tried to conceal it. I stared at Vaughan and was feeling sick. 'No, I'm not this monster's daughter. I'm the exact replica of my mother; I look nothing like him!' my mind protested. But a small part of me, no matter how much I despised it, could see the resemblance of this demon with the man that had ever visited my mother. And my mother said the man was my father... I gritted my

teeth and pushed aside that thought; It didn't make any difference who my father was. I didn't care. I turned my attention to the mention of this place. 'So this is it, the underworld..I'm here at last..though I can't remember how I get here in the first place..the demon side in me must have found the way in somehow.' I pondered.

"Thank you for the human and the horse, by the way." Said Vaughan, cutting my train of thoughts, "The children are feasting on them as we speak. Too bad the white one got away..it looks delicious." He smacked his lips.

I looked at him in utter horror. Was he talking about Arnvid and his horse? 'Of course he is!' I heard myself snapped. 'Oh My God..What have I done?!' I thought frantically. The notion of me bringing death to the hunter made my eyes burned in tears. It wasn't long before I felt my cheeks wet.

"Ah..don't cry. We left you some, you know. Here." Vaughan misunderstood my silence and my tears, then he threw something to my feet. I looked down and screamed in terror. It was Arnvid's head! His

dead pale face fixed on a petrified expression (I couldn't even imagine what was the last thing he saw) and his dead eyes looked like a pair of black marbles. At once I felt extremely sick; my hand flew to cover my mouth and I looked up at the demon with a mixed feelings of anger, sadness, and disbelief.

"How.." I choked, "How could you-" I didn't finished my question, because I knew it's rhetorical; of course he could. Just by looking at him I knew he could do anything cruel.

"What, you don't want it, Zeva? That breaks daddy's heart, you know.." he pretended to look offended, but he's such an awful actor. He disgusted me. How dare he said I broke his heart when he didn't even have one in the first place!

"My name's Lunalea." I said sternly. At that moment I decided at once that I would discard my past name forever. Besides, the only person who had the right to address me with that name had passed away.

"Is that so.." Vaughan suddenly approached me and rendered his claw-like hand. I jumped backwards and instinctively wrapped my arms around my belly,

protecting it. But the demon reached for my face and grabbed my chin, lifting it up. I flinched at how cold and rough his hand was. I tried to recoil, but his grisp was very firm his nails actually cut through my skin.

Vaughan stared straight into my eyes sharply, he seemed to be searching for something... someone.. "I see.." he hissed, his breath released a foul odour into the air, forcing me to hold my breath, "you still have the weak human side in you, don't you..?"

I shuddered at the way he was talking to me but at the same time time he wasn't. I took it he was trying to communicate with the demon inside me. "But don't worry," he grinned from ear to ear, "the longer you stay here, the stronger you will be. And soon your human side will disappear." Then he let go of my chin and retreated.

"I will not stay!" I shouted at him, and I did intend to escape one way or another. I had regained some of my memories and there's no reason I should stay here. "And you can't make me!"

"You have a duty here, you know." Replied Vaughan in a bored tone, "You are to lead the demon army and bring victory to the demons."

Now it's my turn to laugh at his ridiculous idea. Vaughan frowned in dislike. And my laugh stopped when I remembered what Haelock said that night, '..being a new leader' and '..Vaughan's daughter..' At that time I didn't understand what the snake-like demon meant..

"This is a sick joke." I muttered, again with the 'reject horrible truth' thing.

Vaughan didn't seem to hear me."I was pleased that you killed that stupid Haelock." He declared. "He had killed every other candidate for the new leader, which means you as the sole survivor earn the honor."

A part of me was pleased too knowing that Haelock's dead, but for most part I was revolted by the thought of me-scratched that-the demon me leading the demon army in a war against human. When Lord Uriel told me I'd be a threat to the kingdom, I didn't think it'd be a threat this big. What sickened me more

was the fact if that happened, I would probably face Lord Mikael in the battlefield. Perhaps I wouldn't know what I would be doing, who I would be facing..and killing, but what about him? What would he feel to see me as an enemy? I didn't want him to feel betrayed..I didn't want him to hate me... But that was so selfish of me. He probably hated me already.

Wait. How could I be a demon leader if my human side was still in control of this body? 'I'll do everything to suppress the demon side. Lord Raphael will help me. We'll find a cure. Ha!' I thought smudgly.

When I looked up to tell Vaughan what I was thinking, the demon had already gone.

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Sorry there's no Mikael's POV. It seems to be longer than I expected, so I detach it from [pt.18].

As usual, thank you for reading, commenting on, and voting for this story =) I love you all xo

Chapter 19

[pt.19] The Unexpected Assistance

Part 19

THE UNEXPECTED ASSISTANCE

[Mikael POV]

I didn’t know how long time had passed since Raphael left me alone in this dark and filthy dungeon. I was too lost in my own thought until I decided that I didn’t care. For now. I didn’t care whether Lunalea was a half-demon, at least not until I saw her turn evil by my own eyes. Even then I wasn’t so sure if I would have the heart to kill her; to contain her perhaps, but not to kill her, if I could help it.

Thinking of Lunalea made me want to see her more. I needed to feel her in my arms. I had to go after her. So my problem now was to get out of this dungeon.

Firstly I scrutinized the iron cuff holding my wrists; its tight, I couldn't do the 'break your thumb and slip your hand free' trick. Then I tried again to yank the chains off the stone wall; this time to test the strength. To my dismay, the chains didn't seem to be rusted and my strength alone had little chance to cut the links. My next attempt concerned with the stone wall; I pressed my fingers against the surface where the chains linked to the wall. It hard and cold, and slighty damp. Good.

I admitted that I wasn't a genius, rather I was the kind of man who tended to solve problems by violence. But I wasn't stupid enough as to punch a stone wall with bare hands. I ripped my tunic and wrapped my knuckles with it.

Gathering all my force in my right fist, I delivered a mighty blow onto the wall to my left side. A muffled thud echoed throughout the dungeon, but I was the only prisoner in this section and there's no guard

nearby that could possibly be attracted by the sound. The impact of the blow jarred my teeth and pain stung my hand instantly, whilst the wall stood firm. Well, I wasn't expecting to be successful in the first try anyway. I tightened my fist and punched again. And again. And again…

After a few hits the tunic that covered my hand began to drench in blood and was badly torn, but in return, a few cracks began to appear on the wall. 'Just a little further' I told myself, ignoring the throbbing pain in my hand. And I continued my endeavour. The chain finally loosened from the wall and it fell off with a clank to the floor when I pulled it. I grinned, pleased with myself. Now it's the turn of the wall to my right side.. I gritted my teeth, clenched my left fist and started punching.

I was about halfway through my effort when the sound of light footsteps alarmed me. I stopped hitting the wall and sharpened my hearing; one.. two persons were coming this way. Soon enough, a woman with wavy blonde hair came into view. Behind her was a tall and slender male figure I

couldn’t make out who, thanks to him standing in the shadow.

‘Gabriel.’ I thought sullenly, noting with slight interest that she was wearing her fighting outfit, completed with her bow and quiver of arrows. “What are you doing here?” I retorted before she even reached my cell, my voice laced with annoyance. Just seeing her face made me feel worse. I wouldn’t be surprised if she came to mock me.

The woman raised her eyebrows. “Is that how you greet your rescuer?” she pretended to sound offended. Oh please.

“And to whom do you refer?” I might as well mock her first before she had the chance to mock me.

“Why, I, of course.” Gabriel gave a little innocence smile that didn’t suit her face. I laughed abruptly at her answer, surely the idea of Gabriel coming to save me was just ridiculous. And I wasn’t a damsel in distress, I didn’t need saving!

By the time I stopped laughing, she had come to a stop in front of my cell and surveyed the situation.

“My my.” She clicked her tongue when she saw the state I was in, with bloody hands and cracked wall, “You really are quite the beast, aren’t you? Lucky I bring a beastmaster with me then.” She announced proudly.

“A what?”

Gabriel motioned at the guy standing behind her. He stepped forward into the moonlight and I could see now that he’s actually quite young; a teenager I reckoned. He got a dark skin in contrast to his golden eyes. The boy bowed before me in respect. I noticed he brought some clothes folded in his arm and he also brought my sword.

“Get him out, Kieran. Our time is short.” Commanded Gabriel impatiently.

The boy, Kieran, nodded, putting down the clothes and my sword, then he reached inside his sling bag. He pulled out something small, black and furry. Kieran held it on his palm, whispering something to it, and it suddenly sprang to life; a pair of thin legs appeared and a pair of big silver eyes flickered open,

looking around cautiously. What the heck was that thing!

What surprised me more, when he brought the thing closer to the iron bars of the cell and said “Eat,” the black furball opened its oddly big mouth, showing a set of pointed teeth, and began munching at the iron bars! A beastmaster, eh? I looked at Kieran in pure curiosity. Yet another thing that’s hard to believe. The race of beastmasters was thought to be died out, along with the gradual disappearance of the magical creatures they handled. And when I said magical creatures, I did mean phoenixes, unicorns, dragons, and the likes. No one really knew why they disappeared; perhaps it’s because of the invasion of demons.

In no time a big part of the bars had gone and the furball had grown the size of a child’s head. Kieran slipped inside the cell and approached me.

“So you’re a beastmaster, who has a furball that can eat iron.” I stated as the dark-skinned boy ordered his pet to eat the chains that bound me. Somehow I felt stupid after the words escaped my mouth.

“It’s an Achates, My Lord.” He corrected me politely while nodding slightly. A—what? I never heard of it, must be one of the magical creatures that were considered extinct.

“Yeah, a furball.” I said stubbornly. Kieran gave no response. “How do you end up in Gabriel’s clutch?” I asked him.

“Lady Gabriel is my commander. I have stated an oath to serve her and obey her every order.” Answered Kieran monotonously. And it occurred to me that this boy must be a part of her army; perhaps one of her archers.

‘Blind faith.’ I thought bitterly. Whatever, as long as it worked to my advantage at the moment.

At last I was free from the chain. Again Kieran muttered something to the furball that made the thing went back to ‘sleep.’ It had grown quite big, but it could still be stuffed into Kieran’s sling bag. I muttered “thanks” to Kieran as he retreated. Gabriel threw the stack of clothes to me, then I changed my upper clothes and put on a cloak. When I stepped out

of the cell, Kieran presented my sword before me. I took it and turned to Gabriel.

“You really are helping me.” I said to the woman in disbelief. Gabriel just grinned, and I looked at her suspiciously; she couldn’t be helping me for nothing. There must be something she wanted in return. Alright. “What is the price?” I asked her warily.

“Don’t worry, I’ve already got my payment.” She answered simply. I grew more suspicious.

“And what is that?” I pressed on, didn’t like the idea of me giving her something she wanted without me realizing it.

“I said don’t worry. So stop asking.”

I narrowed my eyes dangerously, but the woman was stubborn and definitely unintimidated. “Fine. Thanks. I’m leaving now.” I started walking towards the dungeon’s exit door.

“Are you planning to go to the Underworld alone?” Gabriel scoffed.

I stopped in my track and slowly turned around to face her. The fact that she went down here was in itself questionable. Not to mention that she brought along a beastmaster, brought my sword, and she was wearing her fighting outfit—as if she knew.. Did she knew?? I scrutinized her expression: grim.

“I overheard the conversation between Raphael dan the King.” She stated, suddenly sounded serious. “I know about the plan and about your favorite healer.” Obviously she was referring to Lunalea. “I know that she went to the Underworld and you must be planning to go after her.”

“So?” I cocked my eyebrow.

“I’ll go with you. And Kieran will too.”

“You’re just gonna be a burden.” I said coldly. It was of course not true; she would likely be anything but a burden. In fact, if I was about to infiltrate the enemy’s base I would need any assistance I could get. I just didn’t like that the assistance came from this sly woman.

Gabriel cursed. “Dammit, Mika! I’m trying to help you! Do you even know how to get through the Adair Woods?”

She’s right I didn’t know. But did I care? No. I’d find a way somehow. I’d cut down every tree in that forest to open myself a path. I’d exterminate every demon that would get in my way. I’d do anything.. Anything to get to my love.

When I didn’t say anything, Gabriel smirked. “I thought so. Just admit that you need my help—I mean our help.”

“You’re implying that you know how to get to the Underworld gate.”

“I don’t.” Gabriel cut short. I was about to snap when she added hastily, “Kieran does.”

I looked at Kieran, who ridiculously seemed to be a bit sheepish. “I don’t know whether or not it’ll work, but it’s worth trying…” he said.

“It’s our only option. It has to work.” Gabriel glared at the boy.

Kieran bowed at her. “Yes, My Lady..” poor boy.

“Are you ever going to tell me what IT is?” I barked impatiently.

Kieran opened his mouth to answer, but Gabriel silenced him with her glare. She then turned to me and said sternly, “Later, Mika. Now we have to get out of here fast. Time is of the essence.” I couldn’t agree less, so I just swallowed my curiosity for now.

As we hurriedly headed towards the stable, Gabriel told me exactly what she had overheard from Raphael and the King’s conversation. The King thought that the plan had failed because White Shadow came back alone; his trusted hunter, Arnvid, didn’t make it. Raphael suggested to use his steed to show the path, simply because White Shadow wasn’t human and it’s clever enough to find back a path it had ever walked upon. The King disagreed and said that he would personally asked Lord Uriel to summon his undead army to launch a strike straight to the Underworld.

“Lord Uriel won’t comply.” I muttered. It’s not the first time a King asked Lord Uriel to do such action.

But for unknown reasons the enigmatic man had always refused, and no King dared to force him to comply.

“I have the same thought.” Said Gabriel. “But what if this time he agrees?”

I didn’t want to imagine that possibility. If Lord Uriel agreed to use his Undead army, there’s a high probability that every demon, everyone, everything within range, would be wiped out.. that included Lunalea.

When we reached the stable I noticed a dazzling white stallion stood next to my Red Hare. White Shadow. The beast’s eyes followed my every movement as I approached it. I wasn’t sure what I should be feeling about it; It brought my wife to the Underworld.. then it came back alone. I wanted to scream ‘What happened to my wife?!’ to it, but I couldn’t. Instead I reached out to stroke its beautiful mane.

“Mika.” Gabriel called me, “Hurry!”

I turned to her and noticed that she had sat on her Faulkner. Kieran had just placed the saddle on Red Hare and went to get an average dark brown horse. He whispered something to the horse before jumping onto its bare back. I couldn't help but to wonder if a beastmaster had something in his voice that could control every beast, every creature. Taking one last look at White Shadow, I mounted Red Hare. A few minutes later, three horses were galloping away from the castle.

"Gabriel!" I shouted, trying to beat the sound of wind swooshing past me.

Gabriel, who was precisely at my left—Faulkner was doing a good job keeping up with my Red Hare—, shouted back, "Yeah?"

"Why are you helping me?" I asked her. Somehow I felt the need to know the reason.

The woman took a good five seconds before she answered, "Let's just say that I don't want you to die just yet!" and she gave me her devious grin.

***

A/N

Hmmmmm… Do you think I need to add more descriptions to this part..?

If you find any glitch, please kindly tell me..

If you read, please comment.. And if you like what you read, please vote.. ^-^

Thank you so much for all the support you've been giving me this far.. Gracias! Hontou ni arigatou!

Have a wonderful day, everyone.. ^-^ xoxo

Chapter 20

[pt.20] The Attempt To Get In, The Attempt To Get Out

Part 20

THE ATTEMPT TO GET IN, THE ATTEMPT TO GET OUT

“We are expendable assets, Nicholai. And we’ve just been expended.”

~Carlos Oliviera in Resident Evil: Apocalypse~

[Lunalea POV]

When I sat there alone in the damp chamber, the memory of my past started flooding my head. The memory of the night my mother died must had been some kind of plug; once it’s pulled, the other

memories were just pouring out. Now I got a theory of why I lost my memory: my mother's death must be so painful for me that my unconscious repressed everything from that point backwards.

I remembered the twenty years I spent with my mother, Arianwen. We live in a cottage just outside the border of Green Vista Village. When I was a little girl I used to go and play with the children in the village. I remembered my mother was a white witch whose main job was to heal people. The earnings weren't that much, sometimes people even paid her with food, but somehow we could live. When I was old enough, I worked at a small manuscriptorium in the village, where I got to read some interesting materials. And then when I reached seventeen of age, I began having black-outs now and then; the demon side in me started to emerge. My mother and I spent most of the next three years traveling all over the kingdom to find for a cure. We had yet to succeed when Haelock and its underlings razed our house..

Thinking about my mother made me want to cry, so I pushed back the thoughts. There's no time to grieve. I

had a more pressing matter at hand: getting out of this place. I gazed down and gently caressed my belly. “I’ll get us out of here, I promise..” I whispered.

But first of all… I glanced at Arnvid’s head on the floor and tried to overcome the sudden agony and guilt that clutched my heart. At least I had to bury what’s left from the courageous hunter. So I digged the soil ground with my hands, since there’s nothing else I could use. “Farewell, Arnvid..” I whispered my parting words with great difficulty, holding back my tears, as I cautiously put his head inside a hole on the ground, “Thank you for what you’ve done for me.. and I wish you could forgive me..”

After the short unceremonial burial, I explored the chamber and found that the only way out was a hole blocked by a massive thick flat circular stone. By my physical strength alone it was impossible to remove the stone. Earlier when Vaughan was present, his oppressing aura made me feel weak so I didn’t bother to try using magic. Now that he left, I could feel my power returning bit by bit. So I waited anxiously until I felt strong enough—if only I got my

tonic I could have recovered faster, but my canvas bag was nowhere to be seen. I kept reminding myself that Vaughan could be back at any second and the thought made me grow more anxious.

Approximately fifteen minutes passed, and I tried to spark a fire using magic. To my relief it worked. I got up and went over to the exit hole. I pressed my left ear to the stone, trying to pick any sound coming from outside. I heard nothing. I guessed it's a good thing I didn't use magic in front of Vaughan; I just hoped he thought I was weak as a human and therefore didn't feel the need to place some guards outside this chamber.

I crouched and touched the soil under the blocking stone. I muttered a spell to lift up the ground. Slowly but surely, the circular stone began rolling to one side, forming a gap where I could slip through. Before I exited the chamber though, I took a peak to make sure it's clear outside. It's quite dark so I made a light orb and held it in front of me. Hm..alright, as far as I could see there's no one.

As soon as I was outside, I noticed I was in some kind of tunnel. I held the light orb high above my head and saw that at one end there was nothing but darkness, and at the other end the tunnel branched into five. Which way should I go? Gambling would do me no good here. I tried to sniff the air in order to decide which way the smell was less foul, but I couldn't distinguish it. 'Is there any spell that can help me in this kind of situation?' I asked myself. 'I think there's one.. Yes, a tracking spell.' The spell would allow me to trace my footsteps; perhaps it's the only way to get out.

I racked my brains to remember the tracking spell—I'd never used it before. Carefully I chanted the spell, hoping I remembered it correctly and that it would work.

At first nothing happened and disappointment was creeping into me. But then a silvery residue started to appear on the ground, seemingly glowing in the dark surrounding. It snaked into one of the tunnel branches. I braced myself for any possibility, sharpened my senses, then I followed the residue.

I treaded cautiously for I didn't know how long. Time didn't seem to matter if you could see nothing and hear nothing. The tunnels down here were like a maze; I was perfectly aware that I could get lost if I wasn't careful. So far I was deeply grateful that I didn't encounter any demon, but this too-smooth get away somehow make me more alert.

Eventually, after the dark tunnels began to make me feel claustrophobic, the track led me to some kind of a wide hall. And I stood frozen when I saw no less than three dozens of demons—big and small—filled the hall. The good news was, they appeared to be asleep. The bad news was, the silvery trace went straight through the hall, disappearing into the other end. I gulped; Now what was I supposed to do?

[Mikael POV]

"We're not heading north." I remarked as I noticed where Kieran was leading us to. Instead of heading north towards Adair Woods and Strangard Mountain, we went northeast, towards a volcano.

"Just trust Kieran!" Gabriel convinced me, though her voice didn't carry her usual confidence.

When we reached the foothill Kieran halted and turned to us. “My Lord, My Lady, please wait here for a while.” He bowed his head. Before I had the chance to pose a question the boy had continued the journey towards the volcano, riding away his horse in an impossible speed, leaving me and Gabriel behind.

“What is that kid doing.” I muttered, staring at Gabriel.

“Just trust him.” The woman repeated, in a tone that clearly showed she didn’t know either what Kieran was doing.

We waited in unease for about ten minutes and I started itching to just leave, when suddenly a figure appeared on the sky in a distance. It seemed to be a bird of some kind; A big bird. As it flew closer, my jaw dropped and I automatically grasped the hilt of my sword. The creature was bigger than the size of an average house, with a pair of enormous wings and a tail that seemed capable to wreck a ship in one whack.

From beside me I heard Gabriel whistled in awe. I glanced at her and barked, “Ready your bow!” But

she was relaxed and turned my glare with an amused look. I ignored her, unsheating my sword, ready for a fight when the creature dived down and landed in front of us with a thundering 'BAM'. It stared at me and Gabriel with its brilliant huge green eyes, fumes emanating from its nostrils. Its scales that bore the color of green tourmaline seemed to shimmer under the moonlight. I didn't realize I'd been holding my breath at the sight of this magnificent creature; a creature that I thought can only be found as illustrations in books nowadays. Dragons had long been extinct—or so they say.

As the dragon gracefully folded its wings on either side of its body, a boy emerged from the hollow between its neck and shoulders. Kieran, the beastmaster. I should had known. Counting the number of surprise I got this past 24 hours, I almost swore that from this point onward there's nothing that could possibly give me a shock anymore.

"My Lord, My Lady." Kieran spoke in a loud and clear tone, "If you could please jump on."

I turned to Gabriel. “This is the means to get to the Underworld gate you were talking about; ‘the only option’??” I gestured towards the massive beast.

Gabriel nodded, “Yep. We figure that if we can’t get through Adair Woods, then we’ll fly over it. If I told you earlier you wouldn’t believe me. This is something you have to see for yourself.” She deliberately explained.

“I guess you’re right.” I remarked. I turned to stare at the dragon again, still trying to absorb the fact that this magical creature still existed.

“Come on.” Gabriel dismounted her steed and started walking towards the dragon. “My Faulkner and your Red Hare can find their way back to the castle.” She told me.

Without saying anything I jumped down from my favorite beast. I stroke its mane and stared straight into its eyes. Red Hare had been more than a mere stallion; it was my loyal companion in battle. “I’m sorry you can’t accompany me further.” I whispered. A tiny voice in my head murmured that I might not be able to come back from the underworld. I bit my

tongue from saying a parting word; sentimental was just not my style. I just patted its neck, then turning around and striding towards the dragon.

Gabriel was already on the dragon's back, sitting behind Kieran, looking excited and anxious at the same time. I glanced at the dragon's eyes; they followed my movements tentatively, but I saw no threat in them, only wisdom and comprehension. I unconsciously bowed my head; I didn't quite understand why, I just thought it's the right thing to do. Perhaps its something about this creature that seemed ancient and needed to be respected.

Swiftly I climbed onto the dragon's back, carefully positioned myself between the spines that ran along its backbone. I couldn't hide my excitement as the dragon spread its wings and got ready to take off. It kicked the ground hard and jumped into the air. The dragon carried us up and up high in the night's sky until we could see the massive stronghold, which was the castle. Harsh cold wind threatened to throw us off balance and I gripped the dragon's scale to tighten my hold.

“Hey, what is that vast black smoke swirling just outside the castle’s walls? It’s not on fire, is it?” asked Gabriel suddenly, pointing her finger. My gaze followed the direction and I felt a sudden fear—which was very unlikely for me. One of the horrible scenes I had to bear witness during this war came into the surface of my memory.

“That,” I said gloomily, “is Lord Uriel’s Undead Army.”

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A/N

Ah..I finally did it. Yay! The description of the dragon was giving me quite a hard time. I had to consult Eragon and Septimus Heap’s books; I hope it turns out okay.. As usual, my gratitude goes to those who read, comment on and vote for this story ^-^

And my special thanks goes to.. ~ladyoflitany~ a totally awesome writer and a very kind girl whose words always inspiring; ~shurtugal2~ a talented writer with fantastic ideas (don’t think otherwise, you’re a great fan indeed); ~Damonh~ a very nice girl whose smile brightens up my day and whose stories

make my heart flutter; ~Sakura_riot~ who amazes me because she really takes her time to refine her work (I wish I could be as patient as you ;]); ~Mildor~ whose works are remarkable (glad I found you!) and whose support I greatly appreciated.

Chapter 21

~Midnight Invasion~

~Midnight Invasion~

SapphireStar had just finished typing part 20 of her story 'My Love, Please Kill Me..' when there's a soft knocking on her door. She glanced at her clock; 11.45 PM. Ugh. Who dare disturbing her this late at night. Grumbling, she went to answer it.

SapphireStar: Yeah?

Gabriel: CONGRATULATIONS! [beaming, showering the bewildered SapphireStar with white rose petals]

Raphael: We're sorry to disturb you.

Lunalea: I make you a cheesecake. [handing over a box with a nice smell]

SapphireStar: [taking the cake, thinking that she will eat it all by herself later] What are you guys doing here?

Gabriel: Party! Party! [she came barging into the room]

SapphireStar: [being shoved in by Lunalea and Raphael] what party?

Raphael: A celebration because you've made it this far.

Lunalea: [smiling] You've made it to part 20.

SapphireStar: Well, yeah..thanks. --Hey stay away from that! [shouting at Gabriel who was staring excitedly at her laptop]

Gabriel: [pouting] I'm just curious. I've never seen this kind of thing in the castle.

Mikael: Don't let her touch that; It'll explode.

SapphireStar: [looking at Mikael, surprised] You're here too! Since when?

Mikael: [frowning, wrapping his arms around Lunalea's waist] I'm at my wife's side the whole time. You just didn't see me.

Raphael: [rolling his eyes, walking over to Gabriel] I'll make sure Gabriel doesn't wreck your device.

SapphireStar: Yeah, thanks.

Lunalea: So..uhm..how are you feeling right now?

SapphireStar: tired.

Lunalea: Aren't you happy you've made it this far?

SapphireStar: Oh. Sure I'm happy. I get some amazing fans on Wattpad thanks to this story.

Lunalea: That's great. So..are you planning on a sequel?

SapphireStar: [thinking] Maybe. That depends.

Mikael: Depends on what?

SapphireStar: Whether or not your baby survives. [Lunalea blushed, caressing her belly]

[Suddenly there's an explosion. SapphireStar was frozen in terror when she saw her laptop on fire.]

Gabriel: I'm Sorry!! I don't know what went wrong.. I was just clicking a little here and there.

Mikael: [sighing] I told you so..

Raphael: Forgive me, it turns out this device is too sophisticated for me.. [shied away]

[SapphireStar was still frozen, she couldn't find a word to say]

Uriel: Worry not. I'll fix it.

All: [surprised] Lord Uriel!

Uriel: No need to shout. It hurts my sensitive ears.[He then waved his hand and the laptop stopped burning. It looked as good as new] Here you go.

SapphireStar: [beaming] Thank you!! How can I ever repay you?

Uriel: You can make me the main character for the sequel.

Gabriel: No! That's not fair! I'm the one who will be the new main character.

Mikael: [mocking] in your dream. It's decided that our baby who will be the new main character.

Raphael: [muttering] then I won't help saving the baby's life..

Gabriel: If the new main character is a baby, then it'll be MY baby!

Mikael: Yeah, right. No one wants a baby with you.

Uriel: [to SapphireStar] I'm off. See you when I see you [Danny Ocean's style].

Gabriel: [smirking] You just don't know!

Mikael: What? Don't tell me there's a man stupid enough to do that!

Raphael: [muttering] this is pointless.

Gabriel: There is!

Mikael: Tell me who!

Lunalea: Stop it you two..

Gabriel: ...

Mikael: Hah! I know there's none!

Gabriel: You jerk! Alright I'll tell you--!

SapphireStar: ENOUGH! [everyone shut his/her trap and looked at SapphireStar expectantly] You guys are giving me a headache. Could you please leave? I really need some sleep..

Lunalea: [smiling apologetically] Sure. We're terribly sorry.. Let's go, my love.. [tugging at Mikael's arm.]

Gabriel: I'll come again tomorrow morning.

Raphael: This is some tonic for you [giving SapphireStar a curious-looking vial] Sleep well.

SapphireStar: Uh-huh. Thanks. Good night. [closing the door after everyone's leaving. She sighed, then smiled to herself] Now I can eat that cheesecake Lunalea gave me.. [opening the box and was dumb-stricken to see it empty, except for crumbs. whoever it was that ate the cake left a note saying: It's scrumptious]

SapphireStar groaned and threw the empty box along with the bloody note into the trash can. Feeling greatly annoyed, she drank the liquid inside the vial

Raphael gave her in one gulp. In an instant she fell unconscious.

Chapter 22

[pt.21] The Demons' Lair

Part 21

THE DEMONS’ LAIR

[Mikael POV]

We were racing with time, because we didn’t know how much longer we had to retrieve Lunalea from the underworld before the undead army launched the strike. I knew not what made Lord Uriel agreed to release his deadly legion, but it didn’t matter now.

“Can we go faster?!” I was practically shouting at Kieran to beat the sound of the howling wind.

“Forgive me, My Lord, but this is as far as it can get!” Kieran shouted back, without meaning to be rude.

I grunted and said no more after that.

After a while, Kieran announced: “We are approaching the Adair Woods!” and I looked down to catch a glimpse of the tips of the trees, but there’s not much to see from up here because the clouds were blocking my view. Kieran tried to sound calm, but I could pick up the wave of anxiety in his voice. I remembered what he said earlier: ‘I don’t know whether or not it’ll work..’

Then it seemed we breached some kind of invisible barrier. The dragon seemed to be pushed back a little, but it persisted on moving forward. I saw ripples of black electricity, just like the one I saw dancing around the arm of the bulky demon I fought the previous morning. The electricity attacked us, but was deflected before it could touch us. Perhaps the dragon had some kind of built-in defensive ward—I heard that some magical creatures had. The question was, would it last?

As if sensing my concern, Kieran glanced at me and exclaimed, “Do not worry, My Lord! The dragon says he can handle this demon magic!”

Oh that’s a relief. Though I was curious how a beastmaster and a magical creature could communicate. Was it telepathy?

I didn’t ponder for long, because a moment later the dragon made a very sharp descent. I tightened my grip on the dragon’s rough scales. My innards seemed to be sucked upwards and got stuck in my throat. I kept my mouth closed tightly in order to prevent me from spilling my guts. I looked down and saw the earth’s getting closer. My head was spinning wildly.

Just when I thought we’re going to crash, the dragon slowed his descent and managed to perform a quite graceful landing in an opening. After he folded his wings, I quickly slid down, longing to put my feet on the firm ground. Gabriel stumbled after me. Her face was pale white and she swallowed hard, trying hard not to vomit. No wonder she’s been unnaturally quiet during the journey. This was the first time I saw her

totally screwed up; her expression said it all. Kieran on the other hand, looked really relaxed, in fact almost pleased with himself. He smiled and appeared to be communicating with the dragon.

Gabriel and I took time to calm ourselves before finally observing the surroundings. To the south was the looming darkness of Adair Woods and to the north was the massive heap of Strangard Mountain. We were indeed in its valley. So now, where's the so-called underworld gate?

"There." Gabriel tapped my shoulder and gestured towards what seemed to be a black hole in the middle of grey rocks. The three of us cautiously approached it; in front of us was a a bronze gate with glowing red carving along its arch. Beyond that gate was nothing but darkness and silence.

"My Lord, My Lady." Kieran drew our attention away from the gate. "I am afraid I can only escort you this far. I cannot leave the dragon alone outside, and obviously he cannot go in." he explained, looking uneasy.

I nodded in comprehension. “You’ve done enough. Thank you. I don’t know how to repay you.”

“You do not have to, My Lord.” Kieran made a bow, “This is my duty.”

“You bet it is!” Gabriel snorted, reached out her hand and ruffled the boy’s hair. I stared at her in disagreement but she was oblivious.

“And this..” Kieran pulled out some kind of whistle that was curiously looked like the skull of a little bird. It was attached to a long cord so that it could be worn like a necklace. “Blow this to call us..I mean the dragon and I, in case we are forced to flee and you do not see us waiting out here when you are back.”

I accepted the whistle and put it around my neck. “Thanks again, Kieran.” Then I turned back to face the gate.

“Are you sure about this?” whispered Gabriel cautiously.

I just shrugged my shoulders. “I never ask you to come.” I told her, plunging myself into the darkness beyond without thinking twice. Behind me I heard

Gabriel cursed, and Kieran shouted something like “May the Gods protect you.” I muttered to myself, as the coldness wrapping itself around me, ‘Welcome to the demon’s lair.’

[Lunalea POV]

‘Now what am I supposed to do?’

With heightened fear I observed the hall. The demons were scattered on the floor in various poses. I could recognize the whiteness of bones here and there, and I remembered what Vaughan had said earlier: ’..the human and the horse…The children are feasting on them….’ My stomach churned and I pressed my hand against my mouth and my nose in a desperate attempt to prevent myself from vomitting. If only the air was fresh, I could just inhale deeply to feel better.. but here, in the demons’ lair, the smell was so awful; the mixture of rotten meat and blood and..some other smell I couldn’t identify.

I needed to get out of here badly. Again I observed my position, the demons’ positions, and the possibility to go through the hall unnoticed. After all,

there were still narrow spaces for me to step..if I was careful enough perhaps there's still a chance.

Okay. No time to hesitate. I dimmed the light orb in my hand, reducing the possibility of waking up any demon. They had lived in the dark underground for a very long time, surely they wouldn't appreciate the presence of light. I steadied myself, calmed down my frantic heart, and took my first step. I moved between demons' limbs extra carefully, avoiding any contact. A few demons stirred in their sleep, but none awoke.

It turned out easier than I had imagined, crossing the hall. I was nearly at the other end of the hall before realizing it. But I didn't dare to sigh in relief just yet; somewhere in my mind an alarm sounded, a warning. It couldn't be this easy.

'crack.'

I held my breath and looked down warily; I had carelessly and stupidly stepped on a bone, breaking it in half. I looked at the nearest demon, the big one with head thrice the size of a human's and fangs portruding from the corners of its mouth. It didn't

budge, not showing any sign that it heard the bone cracking.

I took another step forward—I was approximately five steps away from the exit. And that's when I heard a screeching sound. From above. The sound pierced through my ears, it was bone-chilling. I looked up and saw a pair of red eyes staring straight at me. They belonged to a bat-like demon—that was hanging on the ceiling all of this time. It went without saying that the shriek awoke the other demons; I heard growls from everywhere.

Not wasting my time to look around, I broke into a run. I didn't care anymore if I stepped on whatever blocking my way. Then I heard an angry roar—oops—but didn't dare to take a glimpse. Suddenly a hairy hand grabbed my right ankle, making me nearly tripped. My hand flew to my mouth to muffle my surprised scream. I kicked hard in an attempt to free my foot. Once, twice, I was free. But I tumbled down, the light orb rolled away and lost in the sea of demons. Crawling towards the exit, I muttered an earth spell as fast as I could. Just as more hands

grabbed me, I shot the magic upwards. A huge chunk of rock, followed by some less smaller pieces, fell down, effectively blocking the way out of the hall, preventing the demons to come after me. But still I could hear a rampage on the other side. I made more and more pieces of rock fell.

By the time I could no longer hear the angry growling and howling of the demons, I was panting, exhausted, running out of magic power. I got up and searched for the silver trace of the tracking spell, my way out of this god-forsaken place. Easily enough I found it, and after conjuring another light orb with a bit difficulty, I continued my journey in a much faster pace.

This recklessness made me bump into a brawny being when the tunnel bent rather sharply. Once again the light orb fell and bounded away. I gasped and jumped back, preparing a freezing spell. Unfortunately I could feel my power wavering and I knew my chance in knocking down a demon at this moment was slim. ‘Guess I have to runaway and hide..’ swiftly I turned around and ran, but the

demon caught my arm in a vise-like grip. Without thinking I hurled what's left of my power at my captor. To my dismay, the blue flash from my hand bounded back, as if made contact with an invible barrier. Though I knew I was doomed, I made a pathetic attempt to release myself: punching and kicking frantically—which came into an abrupt halt when I heard my name being called by a familiar voice. "Lunalea..?"

Could it be.. could it be…?

Shaking, I gathered sliver of magic I didn't know I had and created a small light orb. Barely enough to illuminate the face of the one standing in front of me. I couldn't believe my eyes. My heart stopped beating for a second. 'Am I dreaming? Is this an illusion, a trick devised by the wicked Vaughan? I will not be deceived.. but what if he's real.. if he's really… Lord Mikael—'

My thought was interrupted by another name-calling, and all my hesitation seemed to dissolve for a moment. "Lunalea!" He scooped me into his warm embrace. An embrace I didn't realize I missed so

much. “Are you alright? Are you hurt?” the concern in his voice was genuine. I felt tears leaking from my eyes. A small portion of my mind still refused to believe, but the physical attraction between us couldn’t be denied. No one else could make me feel like this.. a pleasant warmth spread all over my body, making me feel all better.

“M-My Lord…?” I whispered, “Is this..really..you..?”

He tilted my head so I could see straight into his eyes.. His black eyes that were brimming with affection. Before I could say anything, he bent down to kiss me full on the lips. Bright sparks danced before my eyes, wiping away the darkness. Butterflies fluttered in my stomach. At first the kiss was gentle and tender, but then his arms that wrapped around my waist tightened, and the kiss became more demanding. I snaked my hand to the back of his neck, then up to the back of his head; it felt right, the length of his hair, the way it tangled between my fingers.

The kiss broke when breathing became an issue. “My Lord..” I whimpered, slightly panting, “you came.. for me…?”

“Of course..” he said softly, pressing his forehead against mine, “You’re my wife, my love…” and he traced my chest lightly with his fingers, as if reminding us of the sacred marriage insignia, an irrevocable bound between two persons in love.

I found myself crying, my chest welled up with so many emotions.. there were so many things I wanted to say him.. ‘forgive me..’, ‘don’t leave me..’, and ‘I love you..’ but I seemed to have lost my voice.. all I did was muttering incoherent phrases.. I was dying to convey my feelings to him, so I put it all in a kiss, hoping he would understand..

Lord Mikael received my kiss gladly, even eagerly. His hand went down to my stomach and lingered there, sending more warmth as he stroked it gently. Suddenly it dawned to me that he knew.. He knew about our baby.. And I felt..relieved, like everything would be alright now that we’re together..

“Ahem.” Someone cleared throat, startling me; I didn’t realize until now that Lord Mikael wasn’t coming here alone. I pulled myself away from him at once. “I hate to burst your tiny little bubble of happiness, but in case you forget, we must get out of here.” The female voice that I heard was filled with sarcasm and aversion. I looked beyond Lord Mikael’s broad shoulder and recognized the slender figure standing a few steps away from us. Lady Gabriel.

Chapter 23

[pt.22] The Supposedly Leader of The Demon Army

Part 22

THE SUPPOSEDLY LEADER OF THE DEMON ARMY

[Lunalea POV]

The first question that came into my mind when I saw Lady Gabriel was: ‘Why is she here, accompanying Lord Mikael?’ She had clearly shown her resentment towards me, so it would make more sense if she tried to prevent Lord Mikael coming down here to see me instead of accompanying him. But then again..perhaps she wasn’t doing this voluntarily. And it’s not like Lord Mikael could be

prevented from doing anything once he had set his mind into it.

Needless to say, Lady Gabriel wasn't pleased with what she had to witness. Even in the poor light I still could see her frowning and scowling. I was embarassed and felt guilty at the same time; after all, I knew what she felt about Lord Mikael. I swiftly took one step away from my husband, but he held me to his side securely, seemingly having no intention to let me go. I wiggled to make a bow for Lady Gabriel, "My Lady." I greeted her politely.

Lady Gabriel scoffed. "I'm surprised you still remember your manner."

"Enough, Gabriel." Said Lord Mikael firmly.

I felt uneasy when they started glaring daggers at each other. But then Lady Gabriel surrendered, "Fine. I'm sorry for being such a bitch." She pronounced. But it's easy to tell that she didn't mean it. I didn't mind at all, because I knew she's too proud to ask for forgiveness. "Now come on let's get out; I don't want to run into more demons."

Lord Mikael simply nodded, then he turned to me. “Are you hurt anywhere? Can you walk?”

“I’m fine, I can walk..”

“Alright then. Let’s go. Stay close to me.”

“My Lord.., there’s something—” I started, but he interrupted by placing his index finger upon my lips.

“Save your explanation for later.”

“But—“

Lord Mikael silenced me by his gaze that went straight into my eyes. His expression was serious and grim. “I know what you are. Raphael told me.” He said slowly, caressing the side of my face. I tensed despite his soothing touch. ‘So he knows…now what..? Does he hate me now? Is he planning to eliminate me once we get out of here?’ Worries and fear infiltrated my mind. Lord Mikael seemed to sense my anxiety, and he smiled assuringly,“But that doesn’t change the fact that I love you, Lunalea..”

I blinked and looked at him in disbelief. The look on his face and the tone of his voice were undeniable.

He meant every word he uttered. I opened my mouth to say something, but couldn't find anything appropriate to reflect my feelings so I shut it close again. Did he know that his words meant everything to me? For him to accept me for who I was, to love me nonetheless...it's more than I could ask from him.

"Don't worry, we'll figure out a way to fix you, okay? Just remember that you have me..from now on you can tell me everything." He whispered in my ear, making streams of tears taint my cheeks again. Lord Mikael kissed my eyes one after another. "Alright. Come on."

I nodded and squeezed his hand gently. Then on we moved. Lady Gabriel walked briskly up front, bow and arrow ready in her grip. Either she was eager to leave this place or she didn't want to be anywhere near me and Lord Mikael. Perhaps both. Lord Mikael held my hand tightly with his left hand, while his right hand was wrapped securely around the hilt of his broad sword. We moved swiftly yet cautiously.

After a while we stumbled upon a messy heap of demons' carcasses. I nearly shrieked in horror before

Lord Mikael yanked me closer to him, blocking my vision from the horrifying view. “Easy, they’re dead. We’ve made sure of it.” He told me, hinting that those demons were the victims of his and Lady Gabriel’s combat expertise.

We went on and entered a great hall. Unlike the one I previously visited, this hall was empty. I glanced around nervously, somehow feeling troubled. We would never know what lurked in the corners, in the darkness..I knew that some demons could make themselves unseen if they wanted to. My nervousness grew as we got closer to the center of the hall, but it’s not like I could do anything about it. This fact kind of made me upset.

Soon enough, what I had been dreading materialized..

“Leaving already?” bellowed a hoarse voice, amplified by the hollow chamber, “But I haven’t got the chance to greet our guests.”

My blood froze, noticing whose voice it was. The three of us looked around warily, but could see very little in the darkness. Lord Mikael and Lady Gabriel

stood back to back, both tightening their grips on their weapons. I was sandwiched between them, muttering a light spell. The orb was not bright because my power was already faltering, but it was enough to broaden our range of vision.

And there he was. Vaughan.

The demon was perching casually on a stalagmite near the other end of the hall, apparently facing Lady Gabriel. She nudged Lord Mikael's ribcage with her elbow so he turned to face the demon as well. A tremendous amount of wicked aura was emanating from Vaughan's build, suggesting that he's not an ordinary demon. His flaming red eyes scrutinized Lord Mikael dan Lady Gabriel, before focusing on me.

"Come to me, Zeva." He ordered coldly. Lord Mikael and Lady Gabriel glanced at me in unison, alarmed, upon the mentioning of the name. I felt an unpleasant shiver down my spine; something's not right I just knew it.

"I'm not Zeva!" I shouted in frustration.

The red eyes narrowed almost into a slit. “Then I’m not talking to you.” His voice was getting colder and firmer. “Come, my daughter, you have an army to lead.”

I felt Lord Mikael’s grip on me tightened. “Get lost, demon!” he roared furiously, “Or get ready to be butchered!”

Vaughan laughed at this threat. “Humans!” he spit the word with pure hatred, “I see you have come to deliver your lives. So be it!” He growled and suddenly two bat-like demons jumped out of nowhere, charging straight at us. I gasped. But Lady Gabriel was faster; I heard the bow string being pulled twice in the speed of light, and the next moment the two demons were groaning on the floor —one had an arrow stuck through its skull and one through its chest. Before they could recover, more arrows stroke at them, sealing their deaths.

“Is that all you got?” Lady Gabriel threw a smug grin at Vaughan, who stared at her with bored expression.

The demon slowly turned his attention towards me and hissed, “Wake up and kill these two!” he ordered.

All of a sudden, I felt that strong pull in my stomach again, this time more violent and faster. I felt like I was going to throw up.

“No, no.. No!” I shook my head frantically and wrapped my arms around my body, terrified. Realizing where this would lead, I stumbled to move away from Lord Mikael and Lady Gabriel.

“Lunalea..?” Lord Mikael tried to pull me back to his side, but I brushed his hand away harshly. I saw pain and grief in his eyes, probably similar to what I felt. My eyes were brimming with tears as I looked at him.

“I don’t want to hurt you..” I said softly, almost in a whisper. The twister inside my stomach was getting brutal and went up to my head, resulting in an extremely severe headache—I wanted to rip my own head off. “If I do that, please..just kill me.” I couldn’t stand it anymore, my consciousness began slipping away. I heard Zeva laughing in my head, ‘I will kill him first, pathetic human.’

The last thing I saw was Lord Mikael's shocked and hardened expression before the usual darkness engulfed me. I was defeated. Forgive me, my love..

[Mikael POV]

Zeva. My Lunalea was..Zeva? Zeva the supposedly leader of the demon army? I had already suspected this—from the moment Raphael told me she was the key to this war, but once it's sealed with words..I was still surprised at how great its impact on me was. I was devastated, once I realized that I had more reason to execute her if she indeed turned evil. And this dreadful demon who claimed her as its daughter..I wanted to rip it to pieces. I noticed of course that it had an immense amount of power in store. It was a high level demon that couldn't be underestimated. But for me, it'd only make killing it more challenging.

When the duo demons appeared out of nowhere charging at us, I had not the slightest doubt that Gabriel would finish them off in a flash. And she did, she even mocked at the high level demon. However,

the fact that the demon didn't seem to be irritated—not a bit—made me uneasy.

The demon issued an order in its bone-chilling hiss: "Wake up and kill these two!" and I noticed in utter horror that Lunalea responded to it; though I didn't know why or how. I was pained to see her twisted expression. She's having an internal struggle, I knew. I called her, wishing I could bring her back to me, but she moved farther.

"I don't want to hurt you.." she whispered with teary eyes, "If I do that, please..just kill me." it was a plea that broke my heart. I was too shocked to say anything, and before I knew it I had lost her.

The first thing I noticed was Lunalea's eyes as they changed color, from deep blue to blood red. Her eyes were fierce, merciless. Her skin turned greyish and seemed to be more transparent—her veins were visible. She grew a pair of black wings that matched her locks, then she raised her right hand, black electricity dancing around her arm, gathering in her hand, and it materialized into a sword—its blade as black as midnight.

She stretched her arms and smirked, “Feels good to be in control again.” I was horror-stricken to hear Lunalea’s usually gentle voice turned into a bone-chilling hiss similar to the demon.

‘She’s a demon too now.’ Warned my logic.

“Welcome back, Zeva!” greeted the demon. “Eliminate the humans at once! We have work to do, a kingdom to conquer!”

Zeva titled head her to one side, staring at me and Gabriel in amusement. “First thing first.” She purred, her eyes flickered. Then, faster than sound, she charged—towards the demon. Her movement was a blur. I heard sword slashing, then something fell onto the ground. In front of us now stood a headless demon which then collapsed in no time, revealing Zeva standing behind it, licking the blood on her sword. “I don’t take orders.” She explained indifferently when she saw our shocked expressions.

I barely had the time to open my mouth to say something when two arrows flew passed me, striking straight at Zeva. She dodged them easily—clearly she was faster than Gabriel. Beside me I heard Gabriel

cursed before shooting more arrows at her. Zeva evaded all of them save one; she caught the last arrow bare-handed, turned it around, then fired it back—fast and strong. It hit. From the corner of my eye I saw it tore her protective shield and hit Gabriel's right shoulder. That was vital for an archer.

Time for a quick decision. I dashed forward to attack Zeva, ignoring all hesitation. As expected, she blocked my sword attack with her own. She flashed a sweet smile that crushed my heart before she crouched and slashed my middle section. I jumped back at once, but not fast enough to avoid her second attack. Sparks emerged as her blade met my barrier. She delivered a powerful blow, but my ward was able to repel it. It's really kind of ironic, to think that she's the one who placed and strengthened my protective ward in the first place. Now she's the one trying to destroy it.

After a few exchanged blows, it was clear that Zeva got the upper hand. Her strength nearly matched mine, and she had the advantage of speed. I was driven back.

But then it happened. I saw a flash in her ferocious eyes—from red to blue then back to red. Without thinking I called her name: “Lunalea!” and for a brief moment she froze. That one brief moment was enough for me to turn the table around. I tackled her feet and pinned her down on the ground. She struggled to release herself, but her effort ceased when I pressed my blade on her throat. Believe me, I didn’t like doing this. At all.

I stared straight into her eyes, searching deep beyond all the cruelty and wildness. I knew Lunalea was there and still battling to gain control of her body back, she’s not entirely lost. “Lunalea, can you hear me?” I spoke softly.

Zeva threw a high-pitched laugh. “She’s not here you know.” She mocked, “That good-for-nothing human will never again assume control of this body. It is mine and mine only!!”

“Shut up! I’m not talking to you!” I snapped.

“Oh yes you are. I’m the only one here, my husband..” she uttered the last word in a seductive purr. It made me shiver, but not in a good way. “So

what you're gonna do now? Kill me? and kill our baby..?" She put on a pitiful expression.

My baby.. Oh my God… my baby..! What about it??

Being lost in desperation for a split second, I lost my concentration as well. Zeva used this chance to push me back and got up, grinning and lifting her sword up high ready to strike me in the front. But the blow never came.

I had already noticed Gabriel creeping up on us, but I didn't know what she was planning, until Zeva raised her sword, fixing all of her attention towards me. At that moment, Gabriel stabbed something on the back of her neck. Zeva was shocked. 'Clank' her sword dropped. She turned around in a flash and angrily grabbed Gabriel by the neck, choking the life out of her. I hurled myself forward and wrenched Zeva away from the suffocating Gabriel.

To my surprise, she didn't struggle. Instead, as I held her in my arms, her body was shaking uncontrollably and her eyes rolled back I could only see the whites. Then, abruptly, the shaking stopped.

Her body went limp and cold. There’s only one word registered in my mind at that moment: dead.

Chapter 24

[pt.23] The Part of The Bargain

Part 23

THE PART OF THE BARGAIN

[Mikael POV]

I howled like a wounded animal, craddling Lunalea's limp body in my arms. She was returning to her human form—her wings seemed to shrink into her back and the grey in her skin was gone. She's also very cold.. My vision blurred with unshed tears. I barely had the sanity to check her pulse. To my relief, it's there, but it was so weak in any moment it could be gone.

“What have you done!?” I roared at Gabriel, furious. I was oblivious to the fact that blood was dripping from her right shoulder, where she had been hit by her own arrow. She was taken aback, pure fear reflected in her eyes.

“S-she’s not d-dead, is she?” she stuttered. “Please tell me she’s not…” Her face was pale; whether it was because of losing blood or because of guilt, I didn’t know and I didn’t care.

“She’s dying!! What’s the difference?!” I lashed out my fury at her.

“Then let’s hurry and bring her to Raphael.” Gabriel blurted out, and I frowned when she said the name. I became suspicious.

“Raphael! Does he have anything to do with this?” I inquired. By that time I noticed an instrument in Gabriel’s hand: a syringe. Did she stab Lunalea with that? If Raphael somehow related to this, I wouldn’t be surprised to know that there’s some formula in the syringe.. “Gabriel, what is it that you injected to Lunalea??”

She shrugged her shoulders, and flinched in pain when the simple movement affected her wound. “I don’t know, I swear! Raphael gave me this and asked me to use it on the healer girl if she turned demon—which obviously she did!” explained Gabriel.

I glared at Gabriel after what she revealed to me. I didn’t know what to think of this. Firstly she helped me out of the dungeon, volunteered to accompany me to the underworld. Then it turned out she had an agenda of her own: accomplishing the task Raphael gave her. Now.. Raphael. What was it with this guy? He’s no less enigmatic than Lord Uriel. He obviously knew more than he told me and seemed like having a plan of his own. I certainly wasn’t sure whether he’s a friend or foe.

My ears picked up some faint growling and howling from the direction of the tunnel where we came, presuming that the demons were heading this way. Obviously, I had a lot of questions in my mind concering this matter, but now wasn’t the right time to pose them. We must hurry and get out of here first. I got up, flinging Lunalea’s body on my left shoulder;

this way I could use my right hand to fight if the situation forced me to. Without saying anything to Gabriel, I started walking away.

“Please. Don’t be mad at me. I’m just doing my part of the bargain.” Said Gabriel wearily, trailing behind me.

Again this invoked my suspicion. I glanced at her. “What bargain?”

She blushed. Wait—she did what? I must be hallucinating. There’s no way this woman blushing. “You don’t need to know!” she snapped.

“Fine!” I snapped back and marched faster, not caring if she had to stagger to follow me.

We wasn’t too far from the way out now. There’s one more fork ahead, where I quickly chose the left one—I had made a cross sign on the wall with my sword earlier to mark our way. On we walked down another long dark tunnel. It went up and widened as we approached the gate. I saw a glimpse of the night sky outside and quickened my pace, feeling more than relief to leave this foul place.

At last we're out. I breathed the clean air deeply, and stopped dead in my track when I realized what awaited us in the clearing. Gabriel almost bumped into me. I heard her gasp. Before us gathered more than three dozens demons, each and every one of them snarling at us, seemingly at a contest to show who got the sharpest set of teeth and the most menacing voice. I clenched my teeth and tightened my grip—both on my sword and on Lunalea's body.

"How many arrow do you have left?" I hissed at Gabriel.

"Less than a dozen." She replied bitterly. Uh. No good. But even with a limitless supply of arrows, we're still at the down side considering the wound on Gabriel's shoulder. "Blow the whistle!" she reminded me, having spotted no sight of Kieran and the dragon.

I nodded and grasped the whistle around my neck with my left hand, bringing it upon my lips. Then I blew as hard as I could. The sound was on a frequency neither I nor Gabriel could hear, but apparently the demons could. Their growls suddenly

turned into painful shrieks. Some covered their ears. After that, they went berserk, storming at us.

I took on a defensive stance; let them come, I would knock them down one by one. Gabriel started firing her remaining arrows. Her speed greatly diminished, but her precision was still outstanding. She didn't waste not even an arrow, each shoot was a head-shot, instant killing. Meanwhile, I swung my blade, slashing and hacking each demon that came at me. Fortunately, they were just a bunch of weaklings, so it wasn't to difficult to slay them.

After she ran out of arrows, Gabriel took out her twin daggers out of her boots. She mainly finished off the demons that still managed to move after receiving my blows. Battles, no matter how easy they might seem, were always horrible to experience. Splashes of fresh blood, ear-splitting agonized cries, and scattered limbs never failed to make my head dizzy, but somehow I could maintain my focus on fighting.

By the time all of the demons were nothing but disgusting lifeless array of remains, both Gabriel and I were panting, breathing heavily. I wouldn't pretend

this wasn't exhausting for me, because it was. I could feel my body drenched in sweats and silently congratulated myself when I noticed Lunalea didn't have a scratch on her—though her garments were tainted by the demons' blood.

"Mika!" called Gabriel alarmingly, "I think more of them are coming!"

I took a fleeting look and was aware of the roaring sound mixed with ground stomping that was getting louder. "I know." I muttered while scanning the sky. Where the hell were Kieran and the dragon?!

"Mikael!"

There they were! A speck of green in the vast black sky. "Run!" I yelled. Gabriel didn't need to be told twice, it appeared that she had spotted the sight of the dragon as well. We darted towards the descending dragon. I glanced back and felt my heart sink at the immense amount of demons that were after us.

The dragon was getting lower and closer. We could see Kieran stood on its back with determined face.

He shouted something at the dragon; we couldn't hear it due the whooshing wind created by its flapping wings. Then the dragon swooped down pass our heads, its thunderous roar silenced all other sounds. There's a horrible rumbling noise from the dragon's belly. I stopped running and turned around just in time to see the dragon breathed a grand crimson fire, engulfing the stampeding demons in an inferno, burning them to the very core. Beside me Gabriel gasped in amazement.

Even from this distance the heat was extremely unbearable, so we took a few steps backwards. Then, after a few moments watching dark figures slithering under the burning flame, our line of vision was blocked by the dragon's tremendous body as it landed right in front of us. Kieran jumped down at once, rushing towards me and Gabriel.

"Are you injured, My Lord, My Lady?" Kieran's voice was full of concern, his eyes zoomed in on Gabriel's wound. "My Lady, let me—"

“I’m fine!” Gabriel snapped, though her voice was unmistakably laced with agony. “Take us to Raphael first. You know the place right?” she commanded.

Kieran stared disapprovingly at the bleeding wound. However, he knew Gabriel didn’t like to be disobeyed, so he just pursed his lips and nodded. We strode towards the dragon and climbed onto its back. I placed Lunalea carefully between Gabriel and myself; she was facing me so I could protect her better from the harsh wind. Once again I felt her pulse: still there, and still weak.. As I wrapped my arms securely around her fragile frame, I cringed at the possibility of not seeing her conscious again. For the first time in my life I felt so afraid.

“We’ll save her.” said Gabriel slowly, without looking at me, before the dragon took off. We left behind the great fire that had yet died down even though everything in it had turned into a huge black pile.

Chapter 25

[pt.24] The Secluded House By A Pond

Part 24

THE SECLUDED HOUSE BY A POND

[Mikael POV]

The war's still on, but I was no longer a part of it. I was merely a spectator, watching from high above; watching as the undead army swarming the land, sweeping killing whatever within their vicinity. It was a bone-chilling view..the undead army left a trail of nothingness behind them. I watched them with a hollow in my chest. Perhaps I wasn't much different from them when I was in a battle. I had killed hundreds of demons without even giving a flinch;

without hesitation. I had always thought that I fought for the greater good..but what did it all mean really..if in the end I couldn't even protect the one I loved and cared about?

As the dragon flew far west, leaving the battlefield behind, I felt like I was leaving a part of me there. 'It really is the end for me, isn't it?' I had lost my cause.. What else would I want to achieve in this war? It wasn't like I had achieved anything anyway. The will to avenge the death of my family had been diminishing gradually, and it was gone when I met Lunalea, my new-found family. Since then I fought for a peaceful future for both of us to live together..but if she's gone too, what kind of life the future held for me then? I hugged her tighter and pressed my lips on the top of her head. 'I won't let you go…again.'

After passing two forests and one lake, I noticed a village in a distance, but we're not heading there. The dragon made a slight bend south and began to descend upon a clearing until it landed in front a two-story house by a pond. We got off the dragon and

headed for the house. It's walls were made of red bricks and it had a short stone-wall as a fence.

Someone had already waited for us in front of the door. Raphael. I held back my rage and suspicion for him, knowing fully well that this wasn't the time to lash out. Lunalea was the most important. If there's anyone in this kingdom who could help her, it's Raphael. I hated to admit it but it's the truth.

"Bring her in." said Raphael in his usual serene voice, without any preamble or greetings. He, too, understood the urgency of the situation.

I brought Lunalea in, followed by Gabriel and Kieran. Inside, there's a thick blanket spread over a table and next to it was a smaller table with several bottles and instruments. I gently laid Lunalea on the larger table, brushing aside stray hair on her face. Her skin was cold, I let my palm rested on her cheek for a while, trying to give her some warmth.

Gabriel sat on a chair with a loud huff. She ripped her clothes to examine her wound that was no longer bleeding. Kieran went to her side bringing a wet cloth. This time his lady commander allowed him to

tend her injury. Raphael was the last to get in; he closed the door after him and took two water jugs from the table. He gave one to Gabriel and offered the other one to me. “You better sit down too, Mikael.” He told me.

I snatched the jug from him and sat on a nearby chair. “You better fix her, Raphael.” I said sternly before taking one big gulp of the water. It cooled down my burning throat.

“I will try my best.” He replied, taking Lunalea’s hand and checking for her pulse.

I tensed while Raphael was examining her; checking her pupils, checking her body temperature, checking her belly..

“I can do my job more effectively,” Raphael glanced at me, “If you stop boring a hole in my head with your glare, Mikael. Thank you.” His calm voice was filled with sarcasm.

Well, what could I say? I was a kind of man who could be jealous easily; I couldn’t bear seeing him

touching her, even if it's for medical examination. So I just shrugged my shoulders.

Raphael turned his attention to a set of bottles on the smaller table, then he mixed several potions into one container and filled a syringe with the mixture. He injected the fluid into the vein in Lunalea's neck. Almost at once, her body shot up then fell back down and started trembling. Horrified, I rushed to her side and glared at Raphael.

"It's alright, it's just a simultaneous reaction, meaning the potion is working." He answered my unspoked question. "She'll calm down in a minute."

True enough, the trembling subsided. "She's still unconscious." I noted, frowning.

"Yes." Said Raphael matter-of-factly. He took her hand and checked for her pulse again.

"Well, can you wake her up?" I asked him, impatient.

"No, I can't. Right now her human side is having an internal struggle with her demon side. And all I can do is to weaken the demon side." Explained Raphael. "If her human side wins, most probably she'll wake

up. But if her demon side wins… she'll be gone for good." Sorrow was clouding his eyes as he said this.

I looked down at my wife and squeezed her hand gently. Her body wasn't as cold as before. I guessed Raphael really did know what he's doing. "What about..our baby?"

"As long as Lunalea still lives, it can survive. We can inject the nutritions it needs from outside. Twice a day. It's your responsibility." He motioned at a steel box containing several identical bottles and one syringe. I just nodded, showing that I understood.

"There is one more thing, Mikael." Raphael looked weary and a bit reluctant to say it. I looked at him silently, realizing that what he's going to say couldn't be something good. "Even if Lunalea managed to survive and wake up," he began, "Her life span will be greatly reduced. After all, her human side and her demon side form one entity. Killing her demon side means killing half of Lunalea."

"You mean she won't live for long."

Raphael nodded in confirmation. “I can’t tell you how long though..”

I sighed. “I’m fine with that.. It’s more than I could wish for..” I said calmly, surprising myself. After all these emotion-stirring events, I could only feel relief now. At least there’s still a chance, a hope for us. I would hold dearly whatever I had in my hands right now.

“Let’s go back to the castle.” Gabriel suddenly stated. Raphael glanced at her and nodded, packing up his bottles and instruments into a canvas bag.

“I’m not going back to the castle.” I announced, thinking that the King had taken a major part in a plan to use Lunalea. I didn’t want to serve him or the castle anymore.

“No, you’re not.” Said Raphael, “You and Lunalea will live here from now on. This place belongs to you.”

I narrowed my eyes suspiciously when I looked at him. “Is this a part of your plan or are you really helping us?”

“What plan?” he looked back, genuinely confused. I cocked my eyebrow. “Oh, right. The plan of messing up with her fate. Well, I’m sorry that it had to come to this. I never meant to do her harm, not after I met her and got to know her..” he paused and took a deep breath. “I never thought you would be involved in this and made things more..complicated. But now..to be honest, I’m just glad her fate intertwines with yours. At least she’s not alone now.”

“If she didn’t meet me.. It’s you that would stay by her side now, right?” I asked him bitterly, still having the assumption that he actually loved Lunalea.

Raphael sighed. “Yes, I supposed so.” He answered slowly, averting his gaze. Gabriel and Kieran had already gone out of the house and Raphael followed them. I exited the house too, to see them off.

Kieran walked towards the dragon that appeared to be drinking from the pond, while Gabriel headed for three magnificent stallions that stood just before the fence. I smiled when I saw that one of them was my Red Hare; my loyal companion.

“There’s a shack in the back for Red Hare to stay.” Raphael informed me.

“Thanks.” I replied sincerely, “Thank you for everything.”

Raphael gave a faint smile. “It’s the least I can do.” He said before mounting his White Shadow.

“So..” Gabriel stood in front of me awkwardly, “Are you still mad at me?”

“No.” I said shortly. And it was honest. I didn’t even feel mad at Raphael anymore.

“Good.” She smiled and gave me a brief hug. “I’m gonna miss you. I’m not saying that I don’t love you anymore..because I still do, but I hope for the best for you. And your wife.” She frowned a little when she said the last word, then she shrugged slowly and jumped onto Faulkner’s back.

Both Raphael and Gabriel waved their hands, without any parting word, then rode their steeds away. Kieran made a bow when the two great generals went by him. Then the boy beastmaster turned towards me and made a bow as well before

he climbed onto the dragon's back. Soon, they were up in the sky flying away, while Raphael and Gabriel went out of sight.

I turned to Red Hare and stroke its mane. "I guess you stuck here with me then." I muttered slowly, pulling his harness and bringing him into the shack. After I made sure that Red Hare was comfortable enough, I went inside the house.

When I realized that both Lunalea's and my clothes were in a mess, I went back outside and took some water from the well. I tried my best to clean all the dirt and bloodstains on our bodies. Then I wrapped the thick blanket around Lunalea's body and carried her into the bedroom. As soon as I laid her on the mattress, I felt all the weariness attacked me at once. I collapsed onto the bed next to her, feeling relieved that at last I could get some rest.

It was so peaceful here; there's only me, my wife, and a tranquil autumn night. We're far from the war and all the troubles. I gently wrapped my arms around Lunalea's body and pressed her close to me. I kissed

her forehead softly and whispered in her ear, “Come back to me, Lunalea.. Please don’t leave me..”

Chapter 26

[pt.25] The End of The Darkness

Part 25

THE END OF THE DARKNESS

[Mikael POV]

The war between humans and demons had yet come to an end. But the demons had suffered a great loss when they lost their supposedly new leader Zeva. The undead army would have swept them all clean, if only Lord Uriel didn't suddenly disappear after he sealed the gate to the underworld—his summoned army disappeared with him. The demons that were left in the upper world scattered and hid themselves deep in the forest or mountain. Soldiers were sent to

hunt them down, but it would take some time before they could eradicate all demons—if that's even possible.

I spent the remaining autumn days to chop some wood and to secure provisions for the next season. Raphael came over once in a week to check on Lunalea. She was still unconscious, but her condition was stable. He told me to keep her warm; well, I knew that much. Each time he came, we would talk and drink for hours, and I was grateful because he's the only company I had in this secluded place (I didn't come down to the village until spring came). Raphael brought me tidings from outside world, from the castle. As time went by we slowly became close friends; though I still felt a pang of jealousy everytime he laid a finger on my wife, I could repress that feeling easily.

The winter was harsh. There were at least three storms every week. I mostly stayed inside making sure Lunalea's warm enough; the fireplace was always lit. Her belly was getting bigger slowly, and I felt relieved because it meant our baby growing—I

never forget to inject the nutritions. Other than that, I spent my time learning to cook and reading books on blacksmith. That was a job I was going to do as soon as I could go to the village and find someone to teach me.

The winter was cruel. The coldness it brought emphazised my sorrow and loneliness. Every morning, day, and night, I would talk to Lunalea about random things, constantly telling her how much I loved her and telling her to come back to me, as if she could hear me. I would whisper to her belly as well, talking to our unborn baby. But no matter how sad I felt, I never shed a tear; I let the sky did that job in the form of falling snow.

Four and a half months passed and still there's no sign of Lunalea waking up. However, when the spring came, it brought a new hope. And I would watch the sun rose with a smile on my face. I knew everything would get better.

[Lunalea POV]

I felt like I was floating forever. How long had time passed? I didn't know..Darkness was all around me. I

couldn't see, couldn't hear, couldn't feel anything. It's like I was dead but my mind refused to be shut down. I found myself thinking about a lot of things..the meaning of my existence, my parents—my kind innocent mother and my cunning demon father, my love, Lord Mikael.. and our unborn child. What happened to my baby..? Did I lose it? What would Lord Mikael think of me…such an irresponsible wife, irresponsible mother…

Grief. Sorrow. I had lost everything that's dear to me… I was alone.

'No, you're not. Wake up! We need you..' came a faint whisper.

Who? Who's that? I could hear now?

'Wake up..'

I wanted to wake up, but how..? I felt too weak to even move a muscle. But the whisper kept calling. The thought that I was needed brought me will and strength. I tried hard to lift a hand and press it against my chest. When I finally did it, I could feel my heart beating; constantly and very slowly. 'I am still

alive.. come on, wake up.. I'm not dead yet..' I kept telling myself.

Then I stopped floating—I was falling in the darkness. I still couldn't see anything, but I could feel the wind brushing against my skin. I could feel the coldness and harshness, feeling my body shiver. Fortunately, it wasn't too long before I hit a soft warm ground. The impact was very minimal, as if the wind laid me gently there.

I found myself able to move, so I tried to sit up. I looked around but saw nothing but darkness. I sighed, 'I'm used to it now.'

Just when I was thinking of what to do next, out of nowhere a pair of arms snaked around me, one grasping my waist, and one my neck. "Miss me?" whispered a cold malicious voice, making me froze.

"Zeva." I breathed the name out.

She tightened her grip. "Yes, dear.. And you finally come down to see me." I felt her grinning as she pressed her cold lips against my neck. I shivered and

was suddenly filled with rage; she's the one who had made me did horrible things!

I grabbed her hand that was hovering above my chest, then brought it to my mouth and bit down hard. Zeva hissed in surprise and loosened her grip. I quickly released myself from her, dashed forward and turned around at a safe distance. For the first time, I came face to face with my demon side, and the sight made shock.

Our physical appearances were identical, except that she had crimson red eyes and greyish skin, and she was torn. Yes, she had several nasty bleeding cuts on her front, her arms and legs. I gasped.

"What's the matter?" she grinned wider, blood streaming down from the corner of her mouth. "Aren't you coming to finish me off?"

"What..?" I whispered.

"Then do it!" she barked, taking one step towards me. "Use your magic! Freeze me! Burn me! Strike me with lightning!" with each exclamation she moved

one step closer and I found myself rooted to the ground.

I shook my head slowly, grimacing as if I could feel the pain that she felt. But then again.. She was me. I was her. We were one. Even if she was someone else, I couldn't bear to witness this scene.. I couldn't bear to see someone wounded so gravely..

All of a sudden she laughed out loud. "You're weak!" she pointed her finger at me, "You can never kill me! Never!!" her voice echoed in my head. Then she stumbled down, coughing blood. Her face twisted in agony. Automatically my hand reached out to her. Despite all the hatred I had for her, I felt this urge to ease her pain. But then I stopped in mid-air when I felt a tug at the lower part of my dress.

I looked down to see a small being clad in a deep blue hooded-cloak. It shook its head and pointed towards a direction. I turned my head at the direction and saw a warm blue light far in a distance. "I want me to go there?" I asked the thing; but it had already disappeared. I turned back to Zeva. By now she was lying on the ground, her eyes were frantic but she

couldn’t move her limbs. Should I end her suffering right away?

I kneeled beside her and took her head upon my lap. She glared at me furiously. “You can’t kill me me.” she spat the words with pure hatred and disgust, then in a flash her hand flew upwards and grabbed my neck. I was shocked, but never had the chance to untangle her hand from me because a moment later her hand crumbled into ashes. The rest of her body followed almost instantly. Dumbstricken, I just sat there for I didn’t know how long, staring at the pile of ashes that was gradually swept away by the wind. I felt a single tear run down my face and I quickly brushed it.

‘It’s over.’ I told myself. I got up and searched for the blue light. To my relief, it’s still there. I started walking, fixing my eyes on the small light, afraid that if I turned away or even blinked it would disappear. Somehow, I had no doubt what was waiting for me beyond the light. I could almost feel his touch, almost hear his voice calling me.. and I broke into a run, my heart soared as the light got bigger.

“My Lord Mikael, I am back..”

***

A/N

Okay..this is the last chapter. Phew..!

Thank you so much everyone for supporting me and staying with me this far..you know who you are. =)

Please let me know if you find any glitch, mistake, error, or if there are things I left unexplained. I will refine this work, so your feedbacks are greatly appreciated. When it's refined I'm going to post the whole story.

Thank you again and have a nice day! =D

xoxo

Chapter 27

~A Bad Day for Mikael~

~A Bad Day for Mikael~

One day Raphael came to Mikael and Lunalea's house bringing a letter for the former great general. It said:

"Give me back my cheesecake! I know you're the one who stole it! -dont try to deny coz I have proof in the form of a videotape! <not that you know what is a videotape>-

And because I'm so angry you better bring me a chococake as well if you wanna be forgiven!

Believe me you dont want to taste the wrath of a real pissed-off writer! <Remember the saying a pen is

mightier than a sword?? Well let's say you wouldnt want MY pen to get anywhere near you!!

-Sapphire Star-"

Mikael gulped, glanced at Raphael who looked at him questioningly, then ran to Lunalea, asking her to bake a cheesecake and a chococake.

3 hours later, Mikael and Raphael was standing in front of the SapphireStar's place...

'knock. knock.'

SapphireStar: (opens door) Ha. I've been expecting you.

Mikael: (presents the cakes) Am I forgiven?

SapphireStar: (takes the offering and smiles) Yes. Come on in. Where are the girls? ..though I'm glad Gabriel's not coming. I dont want to risk my laptop explodes. again.

Raphael: You can relax. She's.. preoccupied at the castle.

Mikael: My wife's entering her 9th month of pregnancy. I forbid her from traveling, though she did want to come. She sends her regards for you.

SapphireStar: Ah..she's always been the sweetest one.

Raphael: Do you have another visitor? I saw a curious-looking shoes by the door.

SapphireStar: Oh. They belong to Lord Uriel's client.

Raphael & Mikael: (in unison) Lord Uriel's here!?

SapphireStar: (nods, sipping a cup of tea)

Raphael: But I thought he disappeared..

Mikael: Where's he? I need to ask him something about Lunalea and our baby--

SapphireStar: There. Behind the dark purple curtain.

(Mikael rushes to the direction pointed)

Raphael: (to SapphireStar) What is Lord Uriel doing here?

SapphireStar: He said he's tired of the war, the kingdom, and all the spoiled kings who ordered him around. Since he doesnt have anywhere else to go, I

allow him to stay here while he works to gather enough money to buy his own place.

Raphael: What job does he do? And you said client..

SapphireStar: (takes a piece of cheesekecake and eats it) This is delicious! Want some? (Raphael shakes his head) Uhm..right. He does counseling for couples and families.

Raphael: (looks astonished and amused at the same time) He does what?? You're joking..

SapphireStar: Well, he does fortune-telling too if there's a fair.

Raphael: But he's the greatest clairvoyant--

(He stops mid-sentenced when a Japanese-looking woman emerges from behind the curtain)

SapphireStar: (to the woman) Leaving already, Aira?

Aira: Ya, I have another appointment..

SapphireStar: You sure? I have a delicious chococake right here... (opens the box of the chococake)

Aira: (almost drools at the sight) I.. em.. I.. (hesitates) I nedd to go. Maybe next time. Thx anyway. Bye. (leaves in a hurry)

SapphireStar: (shrugs) her loss. (shoving a piece of chococake into her mouth)

(Mikael appears from behind the curtain, followed by Lord Uriel)

Raphael: Lord Uriel! We've been looking for--hey, where's your..third eye?

Uriel: (sighs) gone.

Mikael: (a bit panic) Let's go, Raph. Lunalea might need our help anytime now.

Raphael: (surprised) Is it time yet?

Mikael: Lord Uriel said so. Come on.

Uriel: (grabs Mikael's upper arm) Not so fast. Hand me your money bag first.

Mikael: What?

Uriel: You've made my client ranaway without paying. Now give me your money bag as the compensation.

Mikael: But--!

Raphael: Just give it to him, Mikael! We must hurry.

Mikael: alright. (grumbles and gives his money bag to Lord Uriel reluctantly.)

Raphael: Excuse us.

SapphireStar: Bye! Thx for the cakes!

(Mikael and Raphael leave)

SapphireStar: (to Lord Uriel) How do you know about Lunalea? You can no longer see the future since you lost your third eye..

Uriel: (smirks) I'm lying to get rid of them.

SapphireStar: (chuckles) Yea right. You're lying too about Aira.. She never forgets to pay you.

Uriel: (shrugs and pockets Mikael's money bag) What can I say? I need all the money I can get.

About the Author

SapphireStar